

The
SENIOR YEAR
of the
GRADUATED
Sunday School
TEXT BOOKS.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

BV156J

Chap. Copyright 1870

Shelf K 65

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

280

PSALMS, SONGS, PRAYERS, PROVERBS, PROPHECIES.

THE
FIFTH
OR
SENIOR YEAR
OF THE
GRADUATED
SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEXT-BOOKS.



17
B 17

CHARLES E. KNOX,

AUTHOR OF "A YEAR WITH ST. PAUL."



NEW-YORK:
ANSON D. F. RANDOLPH,
770 BROADWAY.

1868

Jan'y 11th 1868
No. 8759

BY 1561
1165

ENTERED, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1868 by

A. D. F. RANDOLPH,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Southern
District of New-York.



37312

INTRODUCTION.

THE Fifth or Senior Year completes the Five Years' course of *memorizing* Scripture, occupying the years between the *oral* instruction of the Infant Department and the *topical* instruction of the Bible-Class. To give a little dignity to the course in the child's mind, as well as to give him the ideas of advance and promotion from year to year, the first of the five years has been called the Primary Year, and the last the Senior Year, making for him a rounded, graduated course before he steps upon the high plane of Bible-class topics.

The Scripture selections of the Senior Year are taken entirely from the Old Testament, but there is a constant reference throughout the lessons to the New. Those psalms, songs, prayers, proverbs, and parts of prophecy have been selected which will be the rich and unfailing source of illumination and strength to the convert all through life. Their one word to the unconverted, too, is Come.

The illustrations and the spirit of the questions have been largely gathered from many old and new evangelical writers. This general acknowledgment is designed to supply the place of quotation-points throughout the book.

By comparison with the Primary Year a very wide advance from the lessons of that book will be seen ; yet the ascent is so gradual that every faithful scholar, it is believed, will, without difficulty, master these concluding studies. So important is the principle of gradual and easy ascent, that these lessons will be much easier to scholars who have been regularly and thoroughly through the course, than to those who have pursued mere desultory lessons. The illustrations, which help to make a lesson seem long on the page, will prove, it is believed, short in the reading.

The author cannot say *too earnestly* that these books are *not* designed to be the chief reliance or the chief guide of the teacher in his preparation. Much has been said against question-books, because they are thought to be the *teacher's* book. Let it be understood that the books of this series are the *children's* books. One of the chief objects of the system, which should not be lost sight of, is to stir the child's mind by suggestions and incitements to his thought, to a *love of study at home*, and to create in him a *growing habit* and a *growing fondness* for independent study of the Scriptures.

The teacher who relies on the question-book only for his preparation or in the class does what a teacher in a secular school does, who never informs himself outside the one arithmetic or geography which he puts into the child's hand. The arithmetic and the geography and these text-books are the *child's help* to the comprehension of what is yet above him ; and the teacher's information and his instruction are to come from a wide acquaintance with the subject outside the book.

And therefore let the teacher not fail to urge every thing which helps form the child's mind in a habit of Scripture study. Let him insist in every instance that the *references* be *found* and *read*, not simply for the sake of the reference itself, but for the habit acquired. There is hardly a book in the Bible which is not referred to in the Third, Fourth, and Senior Years ; and a constant attention to the reference, therefore, will make the Bible familiar as a spelling-book to his mind. Let the teacher insist, too, upon the reviews as much as possible. Let him never fail to require the committal of the Scripture to memory.

The value of a gradual systematic advance and ascent in such a course will not be perceived *fully* until the scholar comes near the end of the course. The accumulation of the system is then seen in clearness, order, and power. Conversion is to be confidently expected, and the development of intelligence, strength, and skill in Christian character. No teacher is doing his work rightly who does not aim steadily at two things, the conversion of his scholar, and to make him wise and powerful—through God's book—in converting others.

BLOOMFIELD, N. J., September, 1867.

THE SENIOR YEAR.

First Sunday.

THE FIRST PSALM.

1. BLESSED is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful :
2. But his delight is in the law of the LORD ; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.
3. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season : his leaf also shall not wither ; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.
4. The ungodly are not so : but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.
5. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.
6. For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous : but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

THE psalms are the songs which were sung in the tabernacle or the temple at Jerusalem. They were sung or chanted when the sacrifices were burned, and at other times of prayer and praise. If you would like to know how they came to be written, turn to the sixteenth chapter of the first book of Chronicles, and you will find a psalm which King David wrote for the singers, when he brought the ark of God into the tabernacle. Look into the *fifteenth* chapter, from the twenty-fifth to the twenty-eighth verse, and you will see that, when David and the elders and the captains went to bring the ark to Jerusalem, King David himself and the Levites, who carried the ark, and

all the singers, were clothed with white robes, and that they had instruments of music—harps and psalteries and cymbals and trumpets and cornets. In the seventh verse of the sixteenth chapter, you will read that ‘on that day David delivered first this psalm to Asaph,’ the leader of the singers; and then, if you will turn to the one hundred and fifth psalm, you will find the first part of *that* psalm is the first part of the psalm in this chapter.

After the psalm was sung and the ark put into the tabernacle, David appointed singers to sing and to play on the trumpet and cymbal and other instruments of music, during the worship of the tabernacle, as you may read from the thirty-seventh to the forty-third verse of the chapter. Afterwards David appointed more than two hundred Levites to sing and to play in God’s house.

You may find out how the psalms were sung or chanted in the temple in the twenty-ninth chapter of the second book of Chronicles, in the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth verses, where it is said that, ‘when the burnt-offering began, the song of the Lord began also with the trumpets, and with the instruments ordained by David king of Israel. And all the congregation worshipped, and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded: and all this continued until the burnt-offering was finished.’

You may see how sometimes the procession of singers and musicians went into the sanctuary, in the sixty-eighth psalm, in the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth verses: ‘The singers went before, the players on instruments followed after; among them were the damsels playing with timbrels.’

What are the psalms?

Were they sung as we sing our psalms and hymns?

Who went in the procession when King David brought the ark into the tabernacle?

What musical instruments did they have?

Where in the book of Psalms is the psalm which David gave them that day?

After David had brought the ark into the tabernacle, how did he provide music for the worship ?

At what time was the singing or chanting in the temple ?

How many psalms are there in the book of Psalms ?

Did King David write all the psalms in the book of Psalms ?

What does the first word of the first psalm mean ?

What part of our Saviour's Sermon on the Mount begins with the same word ?

What kind of a man does this verse say is blessed ?

If you will look, now, through the psalm, you will see that the first verse tells three things which such a blessed man will *not* do ; the second verse shows two things which he *will* do ; the third verse shows what *he is like* ; the fourth verse shows what kind of men are *not* like *him* ; and the fifth and sixth verses show what *will become* of those unlike this blessed man.

What three things does this first verse say that such a blessed man will *not* do ?

If a man does not do a thing while he is *standing* or *walking* or *sitting*, can he ever do it ?

What is the difference between 'the ungodly,' 'the sinner,' and 'the scornful' ?

What is meant by walking in the counsel of the ungodly ? *Answer.* Following the advice of the ungodly, as if a person should hear a company of wicked men planning a wicked crime, and should walk along with them, or should even walk away from them, thinking how he could take part in it.

What is meant by standing 'in the way of sinners' ?

Answer. Standing in the place where wicked men stand to talk about wicked things, or to do wicked things.

What is meant by sitting 'in the seat of the scornful' ? *Answer.* Sitting in company with those who scoff at good things.

What are the two things which the second verse says such a blessed man *does* ?

Which does 'the law of the Lord' mean, the Ten Commandments, or some single law of God, or the whole Scriptures ?

Which is meant, that the law is *one* thing in which he finds pleasure, or that it is his *chief* delight ?

What is it to *meditate* ?

A law of God may not seem to have much in it till we begin to *think* of it. If you read over the law, Thou shalt not steal, there may not seem to be much in it ; but if you stop and *meditate*, saying to yourself, This does not say, *Thy hand* shall not steal, although the hand is what men generally steal with, but it says, *Thou* shalt not steal ; and if you then think who is meant by *Thou*, the soul, the spirit in me, then there seems to be much more in this law than there was at first.

When it says that the good man meditates 'day and night' in God's law, does that mean that he thinks of God's law at every moment, every day and every night ?

What does the third verse say that such a man is *like* ?

Why is a tree planted by the river-side any better than any other tree ? Read Jeremiah xvii: 7, 8.

What is meant by 'his fruit in his season' ?

A tree that bears its fruit in the proper season, and never disappoints its owner, is a good and prosperous tree.

If the leaf of a tree does not wither, what does it show about the health and life of the tree ?

When it is said that such a man is like such a tree, is it meant that his outward life or inward life is like the tree ?

Who does the fourth verse say are *not like* this blessed man ?

What does the word 'ungodly' mean ? *Answer.* Un-god-like ; not like God.

'The ungodly are not so' : not *how* ?

If you will read Jeremiah xvii: 5, 6, you will see to what kind of a tree the *wicked* are likened. Bad men sometimes appear very prosperous, like a beautiful tree; but their tree is planted in a sandy and salty desert, where they may *look* fair only *for a while*.

But with what does *this* verse compare the *wicked*?

The good are like a tree whose leaves never wither; but the wicked are even worse than withered leaves: they are chaff.

You should think of the threshing-floors of Palestine. On the flat top of a knoll, over which the wind blows briskly, the farmer with his fork is throwing up his grain for the wind to blow out the chaff and the chaff-dust. The meaning is, that the wicked have no firm, strong place in the sight of God.

Does the verse mean that the outward life of a bad man, or the life of his soul, is not firm?

What does the fifth verse show will become of the wicked?

What is meant by 'the judgment'?

The good and the bad are mingled together in this world, but in God's judgment of them now the wicked do not stand; and in the day of judgment they will not stand.

What is meant by 'congregation of the righteous'?

Answer. God's people.

What does the sixth verse say is the reason why sinners shall not stand in the judgment?

The work of bad men seems to be as prosperous as that of good men, but God sees and knows both them and their work. God *knows* the way of the righteous, that is, God attends to and provides for the righteous.

How can the *way* of the wicked *perish*? Read Psalm cxlvii: 9.

What way is there so that wicked men *may not* perish? Read John xiv: 6.

Second Sunday.

THE THIRD PSALM.

A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.

1. **LORD**, how are they increased that trouble me ! many *are* they that rise up against me.
2. Many *there be* which say of my soul, *There is* no help for him in God. Selah.
3. But thou, O **LORD**, *art* a shield for me ; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.
4. I cried unto the **LORD** with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah.
5. I laid me down and slept ; I awaked : for the **LORD** sustained me.
6. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set *themselves* against me round about.
7. Arise, O **LORD** ; save me, O my God ; for thou hast smitten all mine enemies *upon* the cheek-bone ; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.
8. Salvation *belongeth* unto the **LORD** : thy blessing *is* upon thy people. Selah.

WHEN does the title say that this psalm was composed ?

David was a great and rich and mighty king. Absalom was young and beautiful and wicked. King David knew that Absalom was wicked, but he did not know that Absalom had persuaded the people of the land to make *him* king in place of his father. But he heard one day that Absalom had a great crowd of people together at Hebron, eighteen miles south of Jerusalem, and that the people had really crowned Absalom king. Then he knew that Absalom would come to Jerusalem with the host of people. David had no army ready to fight him back, and so he said to his servants : 'We must flee, or we shall not escape from Absalom. Make haste, or he will take us suddenly : he will smite the city with the edge of the sword.' Some of his old and true friends went with him. They went down over the brook Kedron, and up the Mount of Olives, with tears as they went, and David barefoot, and with his head covered over like a mourner at a funeral.

Down the hills eastward to the river Jordan they went, and over the river into the wilderness. As he fled, or after he was in a safe place, the thoughts in his heart were the thoughts of this psalm ; for David was so full of feeling, that he was always pouring out his heart in psalms and songs and prayers.

Were there many people with Absalom ? Read II. Samuel xv : 10-12.

What did a messenger tell David ? II. Samuel xv : 13.

What did the king do ? Read II. Samuel xv : 14-17, 23, and 30.

Did Absalom come with his men to the city ? xvi : 15.

Think what a terrible thing it is for a father to be driven from his home by his son, and for a king to be driven by a wicked son who wants to be king himself. And King David was now an old man, and Absalom young and handsome, but as wicked as he was beautiful.

Who was troubling King David of whom he speaks in the first verse ?

How were David's enemies '*increased*' ?

Who were the *many* who rose up against him ?

What did the many say ?

How did they say this *to his soul* ? *Answer.* It was as if they were saying : 'His God cannot help him this time,' or, 'His soul has no help in God.'

What *did* one of David's enemies do and say when David fled over the Mount of Olives ? Read II. Samuel xvi : 5-9.

Bahurim, to which David came, spoken of in the fifth verse of that chapter, was probably one of the villages on the east side of the Mount of Olives, not far from Bethany. Think of King David, his palace, his home, his crown, his wife and children left behind, his throne lost, his counsellors turning against him, one of his subjects cursing him and throwing stones at him as he fled.

What does 'Selah' mean ? *Answer.* Rest or pause.

Its meaning is not certainly known, but it is supposed that it is either a direction to make a 'rest' in the notes of the music, or to pause a moment and think of the meaning of the words.

What three things does David say the Lord is to him in the third verse ?

An ancient Hebrew shield was probably made of a framework of wood, covered with ox-hide with the hair on. Sometimes it was bordered with brass or copper or other metal. The lighter shields may have been soaked in oil and dried to make them hard. No doubt hippopotamus, rhinoceros, and elephant-skin shields were brought from Ethiopia.

What is a shield always for ?

What is God a shield to King David *against* ? *Answer.*

Against his troubles, and against those who trouble him.

What is meant by calling God 'my glory' ?

Answer. When King David sat on his throne, and all his great and noble men stood listening around him, or were doing what he wanted through his kingdom, they were his glory. It seemed as if all his glory was gone. But he says : 'Thou art more to me than all this glory which I have lost.'

How was God 'the lifter up of his head' ?

Notice that there are three things to give King David sorrow : First, his troubles ; second, many persons rising up against him ; thirdly, many who said God will not help him now. Now notice, there are three things against the three sorrows : The shield is against the troubles ; the glory is against those who rise up for his shame ; and the lifter up of his head is against those who tried to cast him down by saying that God would not help him.

For what did King David cry unto the Lord with his voice ?

What is meant by his 'holy hill' ? Read the sixth verse of the second psalm.

David is now driven away from the tabernacle on Mount

Zion, where he used to pray unto God, and he remembers how God used to hear him there.

What three things does the fifth verse say that David had done ?

If you will read the fourteenth verse of the sixteenth chapter of II. Samuel, you will see that David and those with him were weary, and refreshed themselves. Perhaps they rested through the night.

What does David say is the reason why he could rest so calmly ?

How does the sixth verse show that David trusted God to help him ?

Were there as many people as ten thousand who had set themselves against David ? Read II. Samuel xvii : 1, 2.

Explain now the meaning of 'Arise, O Lord.'

It is as if God were asleep and had lain down, while David's troubles were going on.

Does 'Save me, O my God,' mean, Save me from Absalom, or, Save me from my sins ?

When he says God has smitten his enemies, why is the 'cheek-bone' mentioned ?

The cheek-bone is a part of the face which men strike at when they fight. David knew how to fight if necessary, and he asks God to defend him, *as if* God should fight back his enemies by striking them in the face.

What is meant by 'broken the teeth of the ungodly' ?

It is as if his enemies had come like a wild beast upon him to eat up his flesh, and God had driven them off, breaking their teeth by the heavy blows of his club. Read Psalm xxvii : 2.

Why did David say, 'thou *hast* smitten,' 'thou *hast* broken,' and not 'thou *wilt* smite,' or 'thou *wilt* break' ? *Answer.* Because when he wrote the psalm,

he was probably safe from his enemies, thinking of his escape.

Perhaps David was thinking of how God had helped him against the lion and the bear, and against Goliath, and therefore he cries out, 'Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God; for thou hast helped me before.'

What does 'Salvation' mean?

David had prayed God to save him from his enemies, that is, to give him safety or *salvation* from his enemies. Now he says that God is the only one who *can* give salvation, or that salvation *belongeth* unto the Lord.

Who only can give *us* salvation? Why?

What is the meaning of 'thy blessing'? *Answer.*
Thy gift of happiness. God's favor which makes happy.

How is God's blessing on God's people?

Was God's blessing on Absalom and his friends?

From whom only can we have salvation from our sins?

Among whom must we be to have 'thy blessing'?

Third Sunday.

THE NINETEENTH PSALM.

To the Chief Musician, a Psalm of David.

1. THE heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.
2. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.
3. *There is* no speech nor language, *where* their voice is not heard.
4. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun,
5. Which *is* as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, *and* rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.

6. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

7. The law of the **LORD** is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the **LORD** is sure, making wise the simple.

WHAT is the title to this psalm ?

The chief musician was the leader of the music and singing in the tabernacle and temple. David at first appointed the persons for the choirs in the worship. Some were appointed to sing; some to play the harp, the psaltery, and the cymbals; one to *teach* singing. The three best of all were Asaph, Heman, and Ethan; and Asaph was the first chief musician, a singer with cymbals to keep time.

We suppose that, when David sent the chief musician a new psalm, Asaph made a tune or chant for it, or David himself made the tune. Then the psalm and chant were taught to the singers and players, and were sung at the time of sacrifice.

Who was the first chief musician whom David appointed ?

What do we suppose it was his duty to do ?

What is meant by 'the heavens' in the first verse ?

How do the heavens speak of the glory of God ?

Every thing on the earth and *in* the earth and sea shows, in some way, the most wonderful wisdom and goodness of God. But the heavens, more than all, praise God, for they show us other worlds which have, no doubt, in them more wonderful things than our earth and sea; and they show us, too, a wonderful number of such wonderful worlds.

What is 'the firmament'? *Answer.* The vault or arch of the sky, which seems like a *real* arch over us.

What does 'his handywork' mean? Read Psalm viii : 3.

In Jerusalem and Palestine the heavens are even more beautiful than in America, because the air is clearer. The arch of the firmament seems higher, the blue of the sky more deep and rich, and at night all the heavens are brilliant with glittering splendor.

How does a day utter speech ?

How does *day unto day* utter speech ? *Answer.* Day after day the heavens speak of God ; or it may mean, One day speaks to another day, and another to another, year after year, like one herald speaking to another.

Mention as many things as you can, in the firmament in the daytime, which show God's handiwork.

'Night unto night sheweth knowledge' of *what* ?

Mention as many things as you can, in the night-sky, which give knowledge of God's wisdom and glory.

So long as the light shines from the sunrise every morning, and so long as the stars shine out every night, will God's glory and power be shown.

'His varied works of wonder shine,
And loud declare the hand divine
That made the day and made the night,
And sowed the sky with diamonds bright.'

What is meant, in the third verse, by '*their* voice' ?

Where is their voice heard ?

If the sentence *God is good* should be written across the sky in any one human language, millions of people could not read it, but there is no one in any speech or language who does not read in the sun and stars of heaven that *God is good*. Men die, their houses and cities crumble away, their kings and nations fall into death and ruin, even their speech and language slowly change and die, but the days and nights go on in the same speech and language,

'Forever singing as they shine,
The hand that made us is divine.'

What words of this verse are printed in *italic letters* ?

The italic words in the Bible are words which are not in the language in which the Bible was first written ; but they are almost always necessary to make the meaning plain to all kinds of people. Now, if you leave the *italic words* out of

his verse, the meaning of the verse is expressed in a different way. Then the verse will read: No speech nor language: their voice is not heard. ‘The heavens have no *speech*: they have no *language*: they utter no *sounds*. Their voice is not *heard*. But although they are *silent*, they *show* the glory of God.’ If you stand out silent under the heavens by day or by night, and gaze into the sky, they seem to say to you, ‘**THERE IS A GOD.**’

If you leave out the italic words from the third verse, is the real meaning changed?

What line is meant by ‘their line’ in the fourth verse?
Answer. The word ‘line’ means a measuring-line; and ‘their line’ is the heaven’s line, or the measuring-line of the heavens.

When a farmer wants to know how long his farm is, his *measuring-line* goes over the land. Instead of saying his farm is a mile long, you might say his measuring-line goes out a mile. When David wrote the measuring-line of the heavens ‘goes out through all the earth,’ we suppose he meant that the heavens reach over all people of the earth.

Explain now, ‘Their line has gone out through all the earth.’

How do the ‘words’ of the heavens go out to the end of the world? *Answer.* There is no place to the end of the world, where they do not say the same thing.

Whether you are at the equator, at the tropical circles, or at the poles, the heavens look calmly down, and say the same thing to you.

What does ‘in them hath he set a tabernacle’ mean?
Answer. In these heavens hath he pitched a tent.

How has God in the heavens pitched a tent for the sun?

The king’s tent in the east is made of rich cloth in splendid colors, and ornamented with beautiful embroidery. The hea-

vens are like such a tent of blue for the King of Day, and at night embroidered with constellations of stars.

How is the sun like a bridegroom ? *Answer.* A bridegroom who is just about to be married is expected to have a cheerful and happy face. And the sun, coming out of his tent at sunrise, and sending his happy light over all the earth, comes with a cheerful and shining face.

What *race* does the sun run during the day ?

How is the sun like a strong man running a race ?

Answer. In all his long race, from his rising to his setting, he goes swiftly on without stopping, or without being tired like a weak man.

Why is it said that he *rejoices* as a strong man to run a race ? *Answer.* Because it gives a strong man only pleasure to run such a race. And the sun shines cheerfully and powerfully all day long, as if he enjoys his unwearied work. Day after day he comes out of his chamber with the same cheerfulness.

From what part of the heavens is 'his going forth' ?

What is 'his circuit' ?

To what part does his circuit go ?

Read in this way : 'His going forth is *from* the end of the heaven, and his circuit *unto* the end of it,' that is, from the beginning to the end of it.

What does 'nothing hid from the heat *thereof*' mean ?

David has been speaking so far of the heavens; why does he now speak of the *law* of the Lord ?

You should think of King David looking up into the brilliant sky of Judea, with his soul filled with high thoughts of God. The next thing which he would be likely to think of is, that all those countless stars were kept in their orbits because God had made *laws* for them, and then next it would be natural for him to think of the law which God had made for *men*.

Does 'law' in the seventh verse mean the law of the Ten Commandments or the law of the whole Scriptures ?

What part of the Bible was the Scriptures in David's time ?

In what things is God's law 'perfect' ?

Does the law of God 'convert' the soul ?

If you will look into a Bible which has references, you will see among the references that converting the soul is here the same as *restoring* the soul. The verse does not mean that the law of God converts the soul of an unconverted sinner, but that it restores or turns back the Christian soul which has gotten into trouble or sin.

What is 'testimony of the Lord'? *Answer.* The proof which the commands of the Bible give against wickedness.

How is that testimony *sure* ?

Does 'the simple' mean the simple-hearted and sincere-hearted or the foolish and the silly ?

How does the testimony of the Scriptures make the simple wise ? See 2 Timothy iii : 15.

Fourth Sunday.

THE NINETEENTH PSALM.

8. The statutes of the **LORD** *are* right, rejoicing the heart : the commandment of the **LORD** *is* pure, enlightening the eyes.

9. The fear of the **LORD** *is* clean, enduring forever : the judgments of the **LORD** *are* true and righteous altogether.

10. More to be desired *are they* than gold, yea, than much fine gold : sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

11. Moreover by them is thy servant warned : *and* in keeping of them *there is* great reward.

12. Who can understand *his* errors ? cleanse thou me from secret *faults*.

13. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous *sins* ; let them not have dominion over me : then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.

14. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O **Lord**, my strength, and my redeemer.

What two names are the Scriptures called in the first verse of this lesson ?

What is meant by 'statutes'? *Answer.* The laws which the law-makers of a state or nation make are called statutes.

What, then, are 'the statutes of God'? *Answer.* The Bible is the book of the Divine Law-Maker's statutes, just as every state and nation has its book of statutes.

Give any reasons that you can why the statutes of the Lord are *right*.

Do all the statutes of God *seem* right to all kinds of people?

How is the commandment of the Lord *pure*?

The word of God is like a lamp or a sun, and the light of it is clear or pure, burning freely and clearly. Or the commandment of God teaches and requires only what is pure.

Does enlightening the eyes mean the eyes of the mind or of the soul? Read Psalm cxix : 18.

What kind of fear is the fear of the Lord: dread of God, or the fear to turn away his love from us—fear of punishment, or fear to do wrong? Read Proverbs viii : 13.

How is this fear clean? *Answer.* It makes the one who has it keep himself from every thing unclean in his thoughts and heart.

How does it 'endure forever'? Read Proverbs x : 27 and xix : 23. Those who have this loving fear of God, God saves. They live forever, and their loving fear is in them forever.

What are 'judgments'? *Answer.* The decisions of a judge in court.

How are the Scriptures like such decrees of a judge?

If the decisions of a judge are false and wrong, the people in their hearts despise them; but, if they are true and righteous altogether, they honor them and they honor the judge.

What is the meaning, then, of 'true and righteous altogether'?

Why are the 'judgments'—that is, the Scriptures—more to be desired than gold?

What is the difference between gold and fine gold?

Gold, when it comes out of the mine, is mixed with rock and sand and earth. Even after it is melted it is mixed with other *minerals*. Separated from *all*, it is fine gold.

If you will read now what all the verses say the Scriptures can do, and then think what gold can do, you will see which of the two is the more to be desired. The Scriptures restore the soul from trouble and give wisdom to the simple, (seventh verse;) they give joy to the heart, they give light to the eyes of the spirit, (eighth verse;) they make him who fears the Lord to live forever, they satisfy the soul that they are true and righteous altogether, (ninth verse.) Gold can only help get things for the body; it can not restore the soul from trouble, nor give wisdom, nor itself give joy to the heart, nor light to the eyes. Much fine gold cannot endure forever, nor satisfy the soul with its excellence.

How are the Scriptures sweeter than honey and the honeycomb?

Gold can only *buy* things to be seen and heard and tasted and smelled and felt; honey can only be *tasted*, and a little too much is sickening: God's word goes directly to the spirit, and is always pure and delicious to the heart that learns to love it.

Think of the pure honey dripping over the full cells of the honeycomb: even that does not represent the sweetness of the Scriptures to a heart that dearly loves God.

What does 'moreover' mean?

What is meant by 'by them'?

Whose servant is '*thy* servant'?

How was King David warned by the Scriptures?

What did King David say was the result of keeping them?

Does he mean that this reward is now in this life or in the life to come ?

He says, ‘*in the keeping of them*,’ that is, *while* keeping ‘there is great reward.’

What is meant by ‘errors’ in the twelfth verse ?

When David began to think how the law of God warned him, he thought of the number of his sins and the greatness of them, and that their number and greatness were beyond his understanding.

Does any one ever understand how many sins he has committed against God ?

Why does David pray to be cleansed from ‘*secret faults*’ ? *Answer.* Because he knew that, if we had no secret sins, we would have no open sins.

Which is the easier for you to correct, your open or your secret sins ?

What kind of sins are ‘*presumptuous sins*’ ? *Answer.* Bold and wilful sins, like profanity or Sabbath-breaking.

May not secret sins be presumptuous sins ?

David means those daring and open sins which defy God and his law. If you wish to see the difference between smaller sins of ignorance and presumptuous sins, read Numbers xv : 27-31. If you wish to see a secret sin which was a presumptuous sin, read Joshua vii : 21.

Explain ‘have dominion over me.’

When a person has gone so far as to commit these open and bold sins, he will have a *habit* of sinning which will be like a tyrant ruling over him.

Notice that in the verse before this David prays to be *cleansed* from the sins which *he has done*, and in this verse *to be kept* from sins to which he *may be tempted*. And these two things are like the things asked for in the Lord’s Prayer, where our Saviour teaches us to pray first to ‘forgive us our debts,’ and then ‘lead us not into temptation.’

'Then shall I be upright': when?

What great transgression does '*the great transgression*' mean? *Answer.* It means, as if 'the' was left out, 'free from great transgression'—as in the eleventh verse, '*great reward*' is spoken of. Perhaps '*the great transgression*' means the worship of idols, to which the Jews were especially tempted in those days. Even David's son Solomon was afterward tempted to worship idols.

What two things does David pray for in the last verse?

• Is any one strong enough to keep himself from secret faults and presumptuous sins?

Who is his '*strength*'?

What is a '*redeemer*'? *Answer.* A person who buys back another person from slavery, or who brings him back out of sin.

Can any man redeem himself from his secret faults and presumptuous sins?

If he is redeemed, who is his '*redeemer*'?

Fifth Sunday.

THE TWENTY-THIRD PSALM.

A Psalm of David.

1. **THE LORD** is my shepherd; I shall not want.
2. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.
3. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
4. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
5. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
6. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the **Lord** forever.

WHAT was King David himself when he was young? Read 1 Samuel xvi : 11-13, and xvii : 34-37.

Where did David's father live at that time? 1 Samuel xvi : 1 and 4.

Do you think that David wrote this psalm when he was a shepherd-boy, or from the *remembrance* of his shepherd-life?

David was a beautiful boy, growing up to be a young man; and he watched his father's flock of sheep on the hills and in the valleys around Bethlehem. The village of Bethlehem is on a high ridge of hills or mountains, and the brooks flow both ways, east to the Dead Sea, and west to the Mediterranean, through deep gorges and wild ravines. There are plenty of stones for shepherd-boys to sling; and in these wild, dark ravines you may meet wild animals, not far from where David fought a lion and a bear. There are robbers who prowl around the hiding-places. Climbing these bare hills with his sheep, hunting out for them green spots of pasture, fighting off the lions and bears, young David learned here to be strong and brave. We may think of this shepherd-boy, with his ruddy face and cheerful heart, leading his flock with his crook, or slingling stones while they were feeding, or singing to himself some Hebrew song taught at home at Bethlehem.

Describe the country around Bethlehem.

What dangers were there to shepherds there?

What does David mean in the first verse by calling the Lord his shepherd?

Why shall he 'not want,' if the Lord is his shepherd?

A sheep is a weak, helpless creature, which can live only by the care of its shepherd; but, if it can only be near him, it cares for nothing, is afraid of no one, but feels safe and happy, for *it wants for nothing*.

What two things are mentioned in the second verse which they 'will not want' who follow the Good Shepherd?

By lying down in green pastures is food or rest meant?

By leading me beside the still waters is drink or care and guidance meant?

Does David say, 'lead me *to* the still waters,' or, '*along the side of* still waters'?

What are the green pastures which Jesus our Good Shepherd gives to his followers? Read John x : 9, and explain it.

What are the 'still waters' by which he leads them? Read John iv : 14. Explain it.

The country of Judea is a hot, dry, sandy, rocky country, with many small deserts and little water; and shepherds, at noon of the hot summer day, lead their weary flocks to the side of some quiet, shady brook to rest. Perhaps *still* waters are to be contrasted with noisy, boisterous streams on the one hand, and stagnant, offensive pools on the other.

What is the meaning of 'restoreth my soul'?

When a sheep goes astray from the flock, the shepherd goes after or calls after it and restores it to the flock. The soul in us is a tender thing, full of life and feeling, and likely at any time to be injured by enemies, like a sheep or lamb alone in the wild ravines about Bethlehem. Read Isaiah liii : 6, and explain it.

Why is it not safe for the sheep to go before the shepherd in Judea?

Explain 'paths of righteousness'?

Why will not the soul go in paths of righteousness, if Jesus does not lead it?

What does leadeth me in the paths of righteousness '*for his name's sake*' mean? *Answer.* Leadeth me in paths of righteousness for the praise of his name, that is, so that every one who sees his goodness in leading me, shall praise his name.

What is meant by 'the valley of the shadow of death'?

Sometimes night comes before the flock reaches home, and the shadows of the mountain fill the little ravine through which the flock must go with blackness and fear.

Why do not the flock fear in going through such a valley?

What does the shepherd use a rod and staff for?

The shepherds of Judea always carry a staff or rod. It is often crooked at one end, so that he can catch a sheep by the leg with it. With this rod or *crook*, he rules and guides the flock; with it he fights off enemies, and with it pulls back a sheep from a dangerous place, or an untrained lamb which goes off from the flock. Sometimes with it he beats the bushes or kills serpents, or steadies a sheep along the edge of a precipice, or, putting it under, helps them up the steep places.

Show, then, how the rod and staff comfort the sheep?

Explain, then, how the rod and staff of the Good Shepherd comfort the soul in the time of death?

Can you prove from the Scriptures that the Lord our Shepherd has gone already before us through the valley of death? Read Hebrews xiii : 20.

What does 'prepare a table before me' mean?

God not only brings him out of great dangers, but in the presence of these dangers gives abundance of good things. As when we are sick almost to death, God brings us up, and, as if right by the side of our grave, gives us plenty of health and blessings. Or, if we die, spreads us his feast in heaven, in triumph over our great enemy, death.

Do you think David meant at all any enemies among men?

Think what enemies David had had: the bear and the lion; Goliath, the giant, and his army; his own brothers who taunted him; and afterward King Saul and his army, and all the enemies of his own kingdom.

How is it true of a Christian in this wicked world, that God prepares his table before him in the presence of his enemies?

What is it to 'anoint'?

Why was the head anointed ?

When a man was made king or was made priest, he was anointed with oil. And so when any great favor was done to a person, it was *as if* he was anointed with oil.

What, then, did David mean by 'thou anointest my head with oil' ? Read Psalm xlv : 7.

What is meant by 'my cup' ? *Answer.* My measure or my portion of good things.

Did David mean his cup of blessings as a king and a rich man, or his cup of blessings to his soul, ran over ?

What is the meaning of 'surely' ?

What is the difference between goodness and mercy ?

What is meant by 'goodness and mercy shall follow me' ? How long ?

It is as if David had said, God has been so good to me in so many things, that it seems truly as if he will make goodness and mercy follow my path all my life.

Did any one in David's time *dwell* in the house of the Lord ?

Could any one dwell in that house of God forever ?

David meant, 'My love for the house of God shall be always so strong, as if my heart lived always in the courts of God.'

Sixty Sunday.

THE TWENTY-SEVENTH PSALM.

A Psalm of David.

1. THE LORD is my light and my salvation ; whom shall I fear ? the Lord is the strength of my life ; of whom shall I be afraid ?
2. When the wicked, *even* mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.
3. Though a host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear : though war should rise against me, in this *will* I be confident.

4. One *thing* have I desired of the **LORD**, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the **LORD** all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the **LORD**, and to inquire in his temple.

5. For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.

6. And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the **LORD**.

7. Hear, O **LORD**, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me.

WE do not know at what time in his life David wrote this psalm; but, if you read it through, you will see that it was when he was surrounded by enemies, or else when he remembered the enemies who once surrounded him. Perhaps the time was when he fled from Saul or from Absalom.

By what three names does David call God in the first verse?

Is God anywhere else in the Scriptures called light?

Read 1 John i: 5.

But how great a difference there is between saying, 'God is light,' and 'The Lord is *my* light'! If I do not wish to have my wickedness known, it is a fearful thing to have God a light that shines through all things; but, if I am good, it is most precious to me to have him for 'my light,' to look on me and show me and help me.

How is 'the Lord' 'my light'

Who else is called a light in the Scriptures? Read John viii: 12.

What does 'my salvation' mean?

As a child may say, 'My father is my protection,' 'my father is my keeper,' 'my father is my safeguard, I will not fear,' so David said, 'The Lord is my salvation.'

Does the last half of this verse mean any thing different from the first half?

Why should David 'be afraid' of nothing, if God is the strength of his life? Read Hebrews xiii: 6.

‘When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes’ : can you mention the names of any wicked persons who were David’s ‘enemies and foes’?

What is meant by ‘came upon me *to eat up my flesh*’? *Answer.* As if they were wild beasts coming to eat my flesh.

Some of David’s enemies were as fierce and hateful against him as wild beasts. King Saul tried to kill David. The Philistines tried to kill him. Absalom and his men tried to kill him. Perhaps David meant that the enemies of his soul, the wicked who did not like his piety, were glad to see him do wrong, so that evil would come upon his soul.

How did the wicked succeed who came upon him to eat up his flesh?

They wished to make *him* stumble and fall ; but *they* stumbled and fell. Sins are like wild beasts, coming upon the soul to eat it up ; but, if God is the strength of the soul’s life, these fierce beasts shall themselves stumble and fall.

What is the meaning of ‘a host should encamp against me’?

David was a man of war : he had fought enemies himself ; he knew what it was to have a host of enemies encamped against him. Perhaps David here means, though a host of sins, like a great army of enemies, should fight against my soul.

Why should not good men fear when surrounded by enemies? Read 2 Kings vi: 15-17.

Why need a true Christian have fear of nothing?

What is the difference between ‘war rise against me’ and ‘a host encamping against me’?

A host encamping may not actually be in battle ; but when there is war, there is battle and fighting.

What does ‘confident’ mean?

‘In *this* will I be confident’: in what will he be confident? *Answer.* Even in this time of great trouble, I will be confident. Or it may mean, I will be confident in *this*, that the Lord is my light and my salvation.

What was the ‘one thing’ which David desired from the Lord and would seek after?

What was meant by ‘the house of the Lord’ in David’s time?

Could any one not a priest dwell in the Lord’s house *all the days of his life*?

Is the beauty of the Lord any thing that you can be hold with the eyes?

Any thing that we love and delight in seems beautiful to us. The face in which other persons may see no beauty is beautiful to us, because it is the face of a friend, and because his love and behavior is beautiful to us. And every one who loves and delights in goodness, thinks goodness is beautiful, and that God, who is the highest goodness, is most beautiful of all.

Can you explain, then, ‘to behold the beauty of the Lord’?

What is meant by ‘to inquire in his temple’?

To inquire is to seek knowledge; and to inquire in his temple is to seek to know the things taught in his temple.

Can any one who does not love God see any beauty in him?

Will this be the *one thing* which he will desire and seek after?

Where will God hide him in his trouble?

Is ‘pavilion’ the same as ‘tabernacle’?

Did persons ever hide in the temple when in danger?

Read 1 Kings ii : 28, 29.

What is meant by ‘*the secret of his tabernacle*’?

If a king in that eastern land should take a person pursued by enemies into his great tent or pavilion, and then into his

inner tent, that would be the best possible protection, for he would be hid in the secret of his pavilion or tabernacle.

What is meant by 'set me upon a rock'? *Answer.* He will keep me safe, as if he would take me out from the midst of my enemies, and put me above them on a high and strong rock.

Is the first part of the sixth verse any thing different from the last sentence of the fifth verse?

Explain the meaning of 'therefore' in the next part of the verse?

Does 'sacrifices of joy' mean actual sacrifices of beasts in the tabernacle, or the offering to God of joyful and thankful feelings toward him?

Why is 'I will sing' repeated?

Why is singing praises pleasing to God?

David began to feel that he himself had nothing which deserved these great favors of God; and that he had need to cry unto him so that God *would be* his light and his salvation.

What are the two things which he asks for in this verse?

Does 'cry with my voice' show the prayer to be earnest or feeble?

Does 'have mercy' mean any thing more than pity me in my troubles?

'Answer me': answer *what request*?

Seventh Sunday.

THE TWENTY-SEVENTH PSALM.

8. *When thou saidst*, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, **LORD**, will I seek.

9. Hide not thy face *far* from me; put not thy servant away in anger. thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.

10. When my father and my mother forsake me, then the **LORD** will take me up.

11. Teach me thy way, O **LORD**, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies.

12. Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty.

13. *I had fainted*, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the **LORD** in the land of the living.

14. Wait on the **LORD**; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the **LORD**.

Who is it that said, ‘Seek ye my face’ ?

Who is it that answers ?

Does ‘*When thou saidst*’ mean, When God had said already these words to David, or, *Whenever* God should say them ? Read 1 Chronicles xvi : 11 ; Ps. cv : 4.

What is meant by ‘the heart’ and ‘my heart’ in the Scriptures ?

What a beautiful and pleasant way this is of speaking of loving and seeking God ! Instead of saying, Seek me, your God, God says, Seek ye my face, as if there is something pleasing in his face to look at, like the face of a good friend. And instead of David’s saying, *I will seek thy face, O God*, or, *I will seek thee, O God*, he says, *My heart said unto thee*—my affections answered (so great was their love)—*Thy face, so loving and good and pleasant, so full of light and salvation, will I seek.* How beautiful is the response of one spirit, looking with a glad eye up into the face of another.

David has said, in the eighth verse, that he *will seek* God’s face ; what does he now, in the ninth verse, ask God *not* to do ?

If God tells us to seek his face, he meant that he will *show* it to us, which is the opposite of *hiding* it.

Is there any reason why God should ever hide his face from us ?

What other three things does David ask God not to do ?

Who is meant by ‘thy servant’ ? See 1 Samuel iii : 9, 10 ; xvii : 34 and 36.

For what thing only is God ever angry ?

Explain how the Lord *had been* the help of David.

Is there any difference between 'leave me not' and 'neither forsake me'? *Answer.* Do not leave me, even to come back again; and do not forsake me, never to come back.

Did David mean, Do not forsake me in my troubles from enemies, or troubles from sins?

Read 'thou hast been my help' with the emphasis on *hast*. Then the meaning will be, Thou *hast* in the past been my help: do not *now* leave me, and do not forsake me entirely.

Have you any reason to believe that David's father and mother ever forsook him or left him?

It is possible that, when David was hunted by King Saul, and when Saul and all his great men were trying to kill him, even David's father and mother were not able to help David or give him shelter in the house. Many times, in persecution, a father and mother have had more *fear* of a king than they have had *love* for their child.

Give the exact meaning of 'take me up.'

To take one up is to take up a person wounded and deserted by the wayside, as the Good Samaritan took up the Jew wounded and robbed between Jerusalem and Jericho; or, to take up is to take a stranger to your house and your heart and care for him, as you read in Matthew xxv : 35 and 43.

Can you give any verses of Scripture which show that God loves as tenderly as a father or mother?

Can you give any which show that he is *more* loving than a father or a mother? Read Isaiah xlix : 15 and Matthew vii : 11.

What 'way' is meant in 'Teach me thy way'?

Does 'plain path' mean an *even* path, or a path *plainly seen*?

Plain path, in this verse, means an even, *smooth* path, because his enemies are on either side of him, watching to see him stumble and fall.

What does this mean in respect to the thoughts and feelings of our hearts ?

What is meant by the *will* of mine enemies ?

What two kinds of enemies does he speak of in the last part of the twelfth verse ?

What enemy of David was a false witness and breathed out cruelty ? Read 2 Samuel xvi : 5-8.

Explain the meaning of 'false witnesses' and 'breathe out cruelty.' See Luke xxiii : 2 and Acts ix : 1.

Does 'I had fainted' mean the body or the spirit had fainted ?

What does 'believed to see the goodness' mean ?

Answer. 'Had faith that I should see,' etc.

Why would David have fainted if he had not seen God's goodness ?

If you think only of the wickedness which there is in the world, only of the cruelty of men, in wars and murders and hate and revenge, in vice and wretchedness, your heart will sink within you. You must see something that is good to keep up your heart. Or if you think of God only as a God of cruelty and hatred, your spirit would fail. But if you think of God's goodness, of his willingness to be good to *you*, and have good reason to hope he *will* be good to you, your heart cannot faint.

Does David mean by 'in the land of the living' the goodness of God in this life or in another ?

Does David say 'wait on the Lord' to his own heart or to others ?

'Be of good courage' in respect to what ?

How does the verse say God will help us to be of good courage ?

'Strengthen thine heart': how ?

If the heart is not turned away from sin, can we expect God to strengthen it ?

Does the verse mean 'Be of good courage and wait for the Lord' while we still stay in our sins ?

Does 'wait on the Lord' mean wait on him as a servant waits on his master for work to do, or wait patiently till he shall deliver him out of affliction?

If you think how David has spoken of *himself* all through this psalm, how he has said, 'my light and my salvation,' 'mine enemies and my foes come upon me,' 'one thing have I desired,' 'he shall hide me in his pavilion,' 'when my Father and my mother forsake me,' 'teach me thy way, O Lord,' then the last verse seems beautifully said to himself, 'Wait, my soul, on the Lord ; be of good courage, my heart, for he shall strengthen thee' : 'wait, I say, on the Lord,' as if he said : 'Hope on, hope ever, O my soul ; pray on, pray ever ; trust on, trust ever in the Lord.'

Eighth Sunday.

THE SONG OF MOSES AT THE RED SEA.

EXODUS.

CHAPTER XV.

1. THEN sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the **LORD**, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the **LORD**, for he hath triumphed gloriously : the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

2. The **LORD** is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation : he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation ; my father's God, and I will exalt him.

3. The **LORD** is a man of war : the **LORD** is his name.

4. Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea : his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea.

5. The depths have covered them : they sank into the bottom as a stone.

6. Thy right hand, O **LORD**, is become glorious in power : thy right hand, O **LORD**, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.

7. And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee : thou senteth forth thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble.

WHERE was Moses when he sang this song? Find out in chapter xiv.

What had been done?
Who had done it for them?

Notice carefully and you will see that the song may be divided into three parts. Each part begins with the praise of God, and ends with the overthrow of Pharaoh's army. See the beginning of the parts in the first, sixth, and eleventh verses, and the end of the parts in the fifth, tenth, and nineteenth verses.

To whom did Moses and the people sing this song?

Why is this called a song when it is not written in rhyme? *Answer.* Because it is full of high and noble language, like the language of poetry.

Does 'sing' mean just what we mean by singing?

It says in the first verse, 'Then *sang* Moses, etc., this song, and *spake*, saying, I will sing, etc.,' which shows that they chanted in high and glad voices the praise of God for the great victory.

What does 'triumphed gloriously' mean?

How were 'the horse and his rider thrown into the sea'?

Is any thing said of horses and riders in the story?
Find out in chapter xiv.

The horses and riders, that is, the horsemen, were, no doubt, a large part of Pharaoh's army, and, as they came riding in chase of the Hebrews afoot, they looked very strong and terrible. But God brought all their regiments of horsemen down into the sea. What strong and high language it is, 'the horse and his rider *hath he thrown* into the sea,' as if God had taken up the Egyptians riding on their horses, one by one, or a whole regiment together, and flung them far out into the sea.

'The Lord is my strength': explain now how the Lord was the strength of Moses and the Hebrews at that time.

Explain the Lord is 'my song.'

How had he 'become their salvation'?

What does 'I will prepare him a habitation' mean ?

Notice that the *reason* why Moses and the Hebrews will prepare God a habitation is because he is *their* God. To say, 'He is my God, *and* I will prepare him a habitation,' is like saying, 'He is my God, and *therefore* I will prepare him a habitation.'

'I will exalt him:' how can he exalt God ?

What is the *reason why* 'I will exalt him' ?

Think of all that great multitude of exulting Hebrews ! Think of *each* one of them saying : 'He is *my* God, and *I* will prepare him a habitation : he is *my* father's God, and *I* will exalt him.' It was as if God had saved *each* one separately from the sea which had just poured back on Pharaoh's army.

How did Moses and the Hebrews afterward prepare God a habitation ?

How is the Lord '*a man of war*' ?

Put a strong emphasis on the Lord the first time, and a stronger emphasis the second time. 'The Lord is a *man of war* : 'THE LORD is his NAME.' In the Hebrew it reads: 'JEHOVAH is a man of war : JEHOVAH is his NAME.'

What is the meaning of the name Jehovah ? Read Exodus iii : 13, 14.

What is the difference between the name of Almighty God and Jehovah ? Read Exodus vi : 3.

One of the names represents *power* : the other represents *being* or *life*.

Is it *power* or *life* which is shown in a warrior ?

Hear the army exult in God : 'Jehovah is a man of war : that is, The God of Life is a God of Power.'

Does God ever speak of himself as a warrior ? Isaiah lix : 17-19 ; Deuteronomy xxxii : 40, 41.

Against whom does he fight ?

Against what king and captains does the fourth verse show that God as a 'man of war' fought?

Why are the 'chariots' and the 'host' mentioned?

Does the last part of the verse mean any thing more than the first part?

His *chosen* captains: his very best warriors our Jehovah has drowned in the bottom of the sea.

What are 'the depths'?

How can depths cover any thing?

They sunk so deep that, looking down into the depths, the darkness of the depths covered them from sight.

'They *sank* into the bottom.' Did they really *sink* from the top to the bottom?

What is meant by *sank* into the bottom *as a stone*?
Answer. Like a stone which never comes up again.

In the third verse the Lord is represented as a warrior. In the fourth verse this warrior hurls the chariots and armies of Pharaoh into the sea. In the fifth verse the strength with which he hurls them is shown by the quickness and force with which they went to the bottom, as a stone hurled into the sea. And now, in the sixth verse, the right hand of this warrior is praised, which has hurled the enemies so powerfully.

Explain 'glorious in power.' How has he '*become* glorious in power'?

What thing does the last part of the verse show that the right hand had done to make it glorious in power?

God often speaks of himself in the Scriptures as a great and majestic man. His power is represented by his right arm; his knowledge by his 'eye'; his kingly character by his sitting 'on a throne'; his greatness by his putting his feet on the earth as 'his footstool'; his goodness by his shining face; his anger by his hurling weapons and thunderbolts.

In the seventh verse, what, besides his great power, does God show?

The right hand of God represents his omnipotent strength only, whether that strength is rightly or wrongly used; but his *excellence* is the reason why he uses his right arm for good. Because he is entirely right and good and just and pure and holy, he overthrows his enemies. When God overthrows his wicked enemies, he shows that his excellence is much greater than his power.

Explain the figure of speech: 'Them that rose up against him.'

How will God overthrow all his enemies at the last?

What is meant by '*sendest forth thy wrath*'?

He *sends it forth*, like a sweeping fire on a prairie, or a sweeping hot wind over a green field of tender plants.

'Which *consumed* them as stubble:' where in the Scriptures is God represented as a consuming fire? See Hebrews xii : 29.

Annly Sunday.

EXODUS.

CHAPTER XV.

8. And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together: the floods stood upright as an heap, *and* the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea.

9. The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them.

10. Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them; they sank as lead in the mighty waters.

11. Who *is* like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who *is* like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful *in* praises, doing wonders?

12. Thou stretchedest out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them.

13. Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people *which* thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided *them* in thy strength unto thy holy habitation.

14. The people shall hear, *and* be afraid: sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestine.

At the end of the last lesson God's angry power was represented as a consuming fire. In the first part of this lesson it is represented as a wind, which blows the waves into a heap until his enemies enter the sea, when it blows the sea back upon them. The mighty wind which opened the Red Sea is described as only a single blast of the nostrils of the Almighty when he is indignant.

How is God's power represented in the seventh verse of the chapter?

How in the eighth verse?

What is meant by 'the blast of thy nostrils'?

What did the wind have to do with dividing the sea?

Read chapter xiv : 21.

What is meant by 'the floods stood upright as an heap'? Read xiv : 22.

What is the meaning of 'congealed'?

'The depths were congealed in the heart of the sea' means that it *seemed* as if the liquid depth in the heart of the sea into which you looked had hardened into an earthy bottom.

'The enemy said': when did the enemy say this—before they came to the sea, or when they were following the Israelites into the sea?

Notice, in this and the next verses, the quick and lively description of the enemy's boasting, and of God's overthrow of them. See what high and excited feeling the ninth verse shows: six things which the enemy said in their hearts are mentioned; and each thing adds something to the thing before, so that you can almost see the excited looks and hear the boasting voice of the Egyptians.

What are the six things which the enemy said?

Show how the first three—'pursue,' 'overtake,' 'divide the spoil'—follow each other in a natural order.

The other three things follow, too, in natural order: My lust shall be satisfied—that is, my *fullest desire* shall be satisfied on them, I will do as I please with them; I will draw my

sword, (this is the way I will do it;) I will utterly destroy them, (that is what I will do.) The quickness of the language, running from one thing to another, is a beautiful description of an excited and boastful king and his army pursuing another army.

How, now, did God meet this boastfulness against his people?

While the Egyptians were boasting to one another, God was leading them into the very place where he wanted them to defeat them. See how vivid is the description in the tenth verse of what this Almighty warrior did against his enemies.

What things did God do? What did the sea do?

Is there any thing said in the fourteenth chapter about God's *blowing back* the waves upon the Egyptians?

What was the result to his enemies?

'One breath of God was enough to sink the proud foe as *lead* beneath the waves of the sea.'

Which is stronger in the description, 'sank into the bottom as a *stone*,' or, 'sink as *lead* in the mighty waters'?

What gods are meant by 'among the gods'?

We must remember that the Hebrews had just come from Egypt, where the false gods were supposed to be great and powerful, and that the gods of the country to which they were going were supposed to be mighty gods. 'Even if they were gods so great and mighty as you think,' is what Moses means, 'who is like unto Jehovah among the gods?'

In what three things does the last part of the verse say that God is unlike other gods?

How is God in his holiness glorious? *Answer.* God is pure like the sun or like light, and entire purity from all wrong thoughts is holiness. The sun is glorious in pure light, but God's purity is more splendid and magnificent.

How is he in his praises fearful ?

When men really see how great and stupendous God's praises are through the universe, they are filled with astonishment and awe.

Does wonders mean the wonders which he had just done in the sea, or all the wonders which he does ?

The next verse describes how God shows that he is glorious in holiness and fearful in praises and mighty in wonders. He is so glorious and fearful and mighty that if he only stretched out his right hand, the earth swallowed them up.

How can it be said that the *earth* swallowed them when it was the *sea* that swallowed them ?

Was Moses's hand in place of God's hand, or is God *imagined* to stretch out his hand ? Read xiv : 26, 27.

Perhaps Moses, filled with wonder at God's greatness and glory and power, meant that all God's enemies as well as the Egyptians would be overthrown when God should stretch out his hand.

Who is meant by 'the people which thou hast redeemed' ?

How had they been redeemed ?

What was the holy habitation into which God had guided them ?

Of course there can really be no such thing as a habitation or dwelling-place on earth of a God whom the very heaven of heavens cannot contain. But any place which God enters to show the worshipping people that he is God is God's dwelling-place. God told Moses to bring the Hebrews out of Egypt so that they might sacrifice unto him, and that place of God's worship would be God's habitation. Perhaps Moses, as a prophet, predicted the Tabernacle, which was soon to be built.

'The people shall hear' : *what* people ?

Why shall they 'be afraid' ?

Does 'sorrow shall take hold of' mean sorrow for doing wrong or suffering from fear?

Where was Pal-es-ti-na?

Palestina, or Palestine, did not then mean the whole land of the Jews, from Mount Lebanon to the southern wilderness. It meant only the narrow, beautiful plain along the Mediterranean Sea from Joppa to Egypt, the land of the Philistines. The word Pal-es-ti-na might as well have been Phil-es-ti-na. It is very strange that now, after hundreds of years, P-a-l-e-s-t-i-n-e or P-h-i-l-e-s-t-i-n-e, the name of the country of the Philistines, the Hebrews' bitter enemies, is the name of the whole land of the Hebrews.

Tenth Sunday.

EXODUS.

CHAPTER XV.

15. Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them: all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away.

16. Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of thine arm they shall be *as* still as a stone; till thy people pass over, O LORD, till the people pass over, *which* thou hast purchased.

17. Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, *in* the place, O LORD, *which* thou hast made for thee to dwell in; *in* the sanctuary, O LORD, *which* thy hands have established.

18. The LORD shall reign for ever and ever.

19. For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea, and the LORD brought again the waters of the sea upon them; but the children of Israel went on dry *land* in the midst of the sea.

20. And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances.

21. And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

Where were the countries of 'Edom' and 'Moab' and 'Canaan,' spoken of in the fifteenth verse?

Who was 'Edom' at first? Read Genesis xxv: 29, 30.

Edom means *red*, and the pottage for which Esau sold his birthright was red, therefore Esau was called Edom. And it is said that the mountains of the land of Edom, where Esau and his descendants lived, were *red* in appearance, so that the country was properly named Edom.

Who are meant by 'the dukes of Edom'? *Answer.*
The chiefs or sheiks of the tribes of Edom.

At what shall the dukes of Edom be amazed?

Who was Moab at first? Genesis xix: 37.

Who was Canaan at first? Genesis ix: 18.

The countries, as you see, were named after the men who first settled them, as America was named for one of its first discoverers, Americus Vespuclius.

Show what is meant by the three descriptions of these three peoples—'shall be amazed,' 'trembling shall take hold of them,' 'shall melt away.'

Think of these grave and venerable sheiks of Edom, who were never to be surprised by any thing, now amazed at the mighty work of God on the very borders of their own kingdom. Think of the mighty warriors of Moab, who were ready to fight all people, now trembling at the terrible power which had been shown so near them. And think, as the news of this great miracle was carried northward to the people of Canaan, who were like ranges of hills in their ranks and regiments, of those people hiding or fleeing away, as if they had melted like ridges of snow and ice.

What is the difference between 'fear' and 'dread' in the last verse?

Explain 'by the greatness of thy arm they shall be as still as a stone.'

‘Till thy people pass over’: *what*—the Red Sea or Jordan or some country?

Why is ‘people pass over’ repeated?

‘Which thou hast purchased’: how had God *purchased* his people?

Who is ‘them’ in the seventeenth verse?

Is this verse prophetic or not?

What mountain is meant by the ‘mountain of thine inheritance’?

What mountain was afterward especially God’s inheritance? See Psalm lxxxviii : 54.

Does ‘the place which thou hast made to dwell in’ mean any thing different from ‘the mountain of thine inheritance’?

What sanctuary had God established?

How had he *already* established it?

Does the eighteenth verse mean that the Lord shall reign forever in the universe, or in the mountain and place and sanctuary which he has established?

Is it a prediction for the future, or an exulting expression of confidence in him for what he has just done?

To *reign* is to act as a king: has God been represented as a king in any of the verses before?

What two reasons does the nineteenth verse give why God shall be king?

Pharaoh on his horse at the head of his army represents his power and pride. King Pharaoh, the greatest earthly king, God has overthrown, and therefore he is the Greatest King of all. And, like a king, God has preserved his own people from the king who tried to destroy them.

See how, in the verses before, God has been represented as a great and mighty sovereign. In the third verse he is a warrior, in the fourth verse he has hurled his enemies into the sea, in the sixth verse his right hand has dashed in pieces his enemies, in the thirteenth verse he has led his own people out

of the war triumphant, and in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth verses he has made all the surrounding nations fear him.

Have you any account of Miriam in the book of Exodus before this time?

Perhaps she is the same sister of Moses and Aaron mentioned in the second chapter, in the fourth, seventh, and eighth verses. Miriam is the same name as Maria, which is the same as Mary, and means 'rebellion.' Miriam is Hebrew, Maria is Greek and Latin, Mary is English.

Can you find any other place where Miriam is spoken of as a prophet?

Describe a timbrel.

The timbrel is a musical instrument like the tambourine; it is made of a small, thin, wooden hoop, with a skin stretched over it, and hung around with brass bells or round, brass rattles, which jingle when it is played.

What was the going out of all the women after Miriam the sign of?

What did they take with them and what did they do?

When the nation or the king has been successful or triumphant, this was the way in which they showed their joy. Read how a daughter welcomed her father home in Judges xi : 34, and how the women welcomed David in I. Samuel xviii : 6, and how David welcomed the ark of God in II. Samuel vi : 14-16.

What is meant by Miriam '*answered*' them?

Notice that Miriam repeats the opening words of the song, only that she repeats it as a *command*. She does not say, as in the first verse, 'I *will* sing,' but '*Sing ye.*' When Moses and the men sing, 'I will sing unto the Lord,' Miriam and the women answer: *Sing ye* unto the lord. Perhaps Miriam and the women answered many times during the chant of the song,

repeating, ‘Sing ye unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously ; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

Show how the three parts of this song begin and end.

What is the subject of the song and of each part ?

Where is ‘the Song of Moses’ spoken of in the New Testament ? See Revelation xv : 3.

Do you suppose that that means this song ?

Why may it mean this ? *Answer.* Because it may be used as a song of victory over all God’s foes.

What a triumphant rejoicing there will then be when ten thousand times ten thousand will be gathered in the heavenly kingdom, and when they will sing, one great part answering to another : I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously ; Satan and his host hath he cast into the fiery sea !

Eleventh Sunday.

WHAT MOSES TAUGHT THE HEBREWS TO TEACH THEIR CHILDREN.

D E U T E R O N O M Y .

CHAPTER VI.

1. Now these *are* the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the **LORD** your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do *them* in the land whither ye go to possess it.

2. That thou mightest fear the **LORD** thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee ; thou, and thy son, and thy son’s son, all the days of thy life ; and that thy days may be prolonged.

3. Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do *it*, that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the **LORD** God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey.

4. Hear, O Israel : The **LORD** our God *is* one **LORD** :

5. And thou shalt love the **LORD** thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

6. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart :

7. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

8. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

It was more than forty years after Moses and Miriam had sung the song at the Red Sea that Moses spoke the words of this chapter. Miriam and Aaron were dead, and all the grown people at the Red Sea except Joshua and Caleb. And the little children at the Red Sea and at Mount Sinai had grown to be more than forty years old. The whole great multitude of them were now ready to cross the River Jordan into the land of Canaan. And this is a part of what Moses told them they should do when they should come into the land.

What 'commandments' are meant in the first verse ?

What is the difference between 'commandments' and 'statutes' and 'judgments' ?

Where especially were these commands to be taught and obeyed ?

Who were among the people now that were at the Red Sea ?

Why had the rest died ? Read Numbers xxxii : 10-13.

Careful pains are now taken that the Hebrews should start rightly in the new land which they were going to possess. And the whole story of their deliverance from Egypt, of the wonderful doings at Sinai, of the journey in the wilderness, is told over to them by Moses. This book of Deuteronomy is, almost all of it, the story of what had happened in the time of their fathers.

What is the reason given in the second verse for teaching all these commandments ?

What kind of fear is meant in the words, 'That thou mightest fear the Lord' ?

Who else besides each person before Moses was to keep these commandments ?

After they should start rightly in that new land, to *keep*

right through all the history of the nation, the father must teach his child and the child the grandchild, and so on always.

What reason at the end of the verse for teaching and fearing?

What command among the Ten Commandments has the promise of long life in it?

How does keeping God's commands prolong life?

Who is meant by 'O Israel'?

How and when was the name Israel given to Jacob?

What is 'it' in 'Hear therefore, and observe to do *it*'?

What two reasons are given for hearing and observing?

Explain 'may be well with thee.'

'That ye may increase mightily': does it mean the people increase in number, or the nation in power?

'As the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee': can you find in the Scriptures the promise either to them or to their fathers that they should increase mightily?

Explain 'floweth with milk and honey.'

Repeat together the fourth and fifth verses.

Where in the gospels does our Saviour quote this?

At what place was he when he quoted it?

Does this verse mean that the Son of God and the Holy Ghost are not God also?

Can you comprehend *how* these three are one?

As in sunlight there are seven distinct lights, or seven in one, so in God there are three persons in one being. We can know that it *is* so; *how* it is we do not know. We know the *fact* that a blade of grass grows; *how* it grows we do not know.

Can you tell the difference between 'heart' and 'soul' and 'might'?

Is this the first thing which Moses commands to be taught to children or not?

Who is it that is commanded to love God with all the soul?

Is having them 'in thine heart' different from having them in our minds ?

To whom shall they be taught ?

Who shall teach them ?

Why shall they be talked of in the house ?

Is there any thing different meant in talking of them 'when walking by the way' and 'when thou liest down and when thou risest up' ?

To talk of them when sitting in the house and when walking out, when resting and when rising, would be to talk of them all the time. This does not mean, of course, that a father shall talk all day long about these commands, but that he should teach them at all proper times.

What does 'diligently' mean ?

How could these words be bound upon the hand ?

Does 'for a sign' mean for a sign of what is past, or for a sign of what is to be ?

What are 'frontlets' ?

Can you find any other place in the Old Testament where these 'signs' and 'frontlets' are spoken of ?

The Jews thought this was a command to write these words on strips of parchment and bind these strips on the hand or wrist and on the forehead. These parchments for the forehead were the phylacteries which the Pharisees in our Lord's day used to make broad. Read Matthew xxiii : 5.

Do you think this direction meant that they should write these words in that way or not ?

Twelfth Sunday.

DEUTERONOMY.

CHAPTER VI.

9. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

10. And it shall be, when the **Lord** thy God shall have brought thee

into the land which he sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildest not,

11. And houses full of all good *things*, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive-trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten, and be full:

12. *Then* beware lest thou forget the **LORD**, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

13. Thou shalt fear the **LORD** thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name.

14. Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which are round about you;

15. (For the **LORD** thy God is a jealous God among you,) lest the anger of the **LORD** thy God be kindled against you, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth.

16. Ye shall not tempt the **LORD** thy God, as ye tempted *him* in Massah.

Is this ninth verse a command to write these words literally on the door-posts or house-posts?

See how many ways are mentioned by which these words of God shall be taught in the family: when sitting, when walking, when lying down, when rising up, binding them on the hand, binding them between the eyes, writing them on the house-posts, writing them on the gates.

What 'land' did God 'sware unto their fathers'?

What is meant by *swearing the land* unto their fathers?

Find in the Scriptures the place where God swore to give that land unto Abraham.

Find where he promised to give it to Isaac. To Jacob.

Are the 'great and goodly cities,' and 'houses,' and 'wells,' and 'vineyards,' and 'olive-trees,' things which God promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; or is the verse to read in this way, 'When the Lord thy God shall have brought *thee* into the land, . . . to give *thee* great and goodly cities,' etc.?

How many separate good things are promised to them in the tenth and eleventh verses?

Notice the kinds of things promised: cities with walls for defence and for glory; houses for the comforts of home; wells of water, which in the dry country of the East were worth a great price; vineyards and olive-yards, that is, fields of fruit like grapes and olives.

Who built the cities, and filled the houses, and digged the wells, and planted the vineyards?

Explain 'when thou shalt have eaten and be full.'

'Beware' of what?

Does abundance of good things make people forget God? Why?

Why *should* abundance make us *think* of God?

What had the **LORD** done for them more than to give them these good things?

Think whether there could be any greater prosperity than for the Hebrews to be brought out of the degraded slavery of Egypt to the great and goodly cities and houses and wells and fields of the land to which they were going.

Explain the three things of the thirteenth verse which they are commanded to do toward God.

'Shalt swear by his name' means that, when the people should take a solemn oath, they should not swear by any false god, but only by the True.

What commandment of the Ten Commandments does the fourteenth verse really repeat?

The people of all that great region in the East had a great number of false gods, of many ranks and kinds, great and small. These were not simply false idols, but, in the thoughts of the people, they were cruel and impure and vicious gods, full of all kinds of wickedness. It is against these that God commands that they shall not go after other gods, and says: 'Thou shalt have no other gods before me.'

Explain how God can be called a 'jealous God,' as he is in the fifteenth verse.

Every good man is jealous of his reputation and honesty and truth ; every man is intensely jealous of any man who should try to turn him out of his house and to take his place ; and just so God is jealous of having a false, cruel, sensual god take his place in men's minds.

‘Lest the anger of the Lord thy God’ : why is it right for God to be angry ?

Explain ‘be kindled against thee.’

To kindle is like a fire kindling into a flame : what is meant when God is represented as a *consuming fire* ?

When is it right for God to destroy his creatures from off the face of the earth ?

Does God ever destroy them so ?

Explain ‘Ye shall not *tempt* the Lord thy God.’

Can God be tempted ? Read James i : 13.

What was Massah, and what happened there ? Read Exodus xvii : 1-7.

Did Moses tempt God there or not ?

What now was the first thing, in the fourth and fifth verses, which Moses commanded the people ?

What was the second thing, in the sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth verses ?

What was the third thing, from the tenth to the twelfth verse ?

What was the fourth thing, from the thirteenth to the fifteenth verse ?

Does the sixteenth verse refer only to the fourth thing, or to all the four things ?

How may *we* tempt God in every one of these four things ?

Thirteenth Sunday.

REVIEW LESSON OF THE FIRST QUARTER OF THE YEAR.

WHAT are the Psalms ?

Show how David wrote one of them when the ark of God was put into the Tabernacle.

Which are the five psalms that we have learned ?

THE FIRST PSALM.

What is the first psalm a description of ?

What three things will *not* such a man do ?

What two things *will* he do ?

To what is he like ? How ?

Who is unlike him ? How ?

What is the end of the two kinds of men ?

THE THIRD PSALM.

How do we know when this psalm was written ?

Who troubled King David and rose up against him ?

What did they mean by saying, 'There is no help for him in God' ?

Explain 'my shield,' 'my glory,' 'the lifter up of my head.'

Explain 'heard me *out of his holy hill*.'

Why could David sleep and have no fear of ten thousand people ?

Explain 'Arise, O Lord,' and 'cheek-bone,' and 'broke the teeth of the ungodly.'

Who only has salvation to give ?

THE NINETEENTH PSALM.

Show how the psalm is divided into three parts.

In the first part, in how many ways do the heavens declare God's glory ?

In the second part of the psalm, how many things does David declare God's word to be ?

Show how David's thoughts naturally turn from the heavens to the *law* of God.

Show how 'law,' 'testimony,' 'statutes,' 'commandment,' 'fear,' 'judgments,' are different ways of describing the Scriptures.

Why are they more to be desired than gold and sweeter than honey ?

In the third part, how many things do the Scriptures warn us of ?

What is 'the great reward' in keeping them ?

THE TWENTY-THIRD PSALM.

When do you think that David wrote this psalm ?

Why will no one want who has the Lord for his shepherd ?

Explain 'restorest my soul.'

Explain 'valley of the shadow of death.'

Explain 'preparest a table in the presence of enemies.'

THE TWENTY-SEVENTH PSALM.

Tell what you know about the time when this psalm was written.

By what three names does David call God in the first verse ? Explain them.

What difference is there between saying 'God is light' and 'the Lord is my light' ?

Who were David's 'enemies' ?

Explain 'eat up my flesh,' 'host encamp against me,' 'war rise up against me.'

Why was David 'confident' ?

Explain 'dwell in the house of the Lord,' 'hide me in his pavilion,' 'set me up upon a rock.'

Why are David's words of triumph turned into words of prayer in the last half of the psalm ?

THE SONG OF MOSES AT THE RED SEA.

Describe the time and place where this song was sung.

Why is it called a song ?

Show the meaning of 'The Lord is a man of war, the Lord is his name.'

What besides his power does he show ?

Explain 'sentest forth thy wrath,' 'blast of thy nostrils.'

How has God purchased his people ?

What did Miriam do when the song was sung ?

Is this the Song of Moses spoken of in the Revelation ?

THE THINGS TO BE TAUGHT THE CHILDREN.

What things were these taught by Moses ?

Why were the Hebrews *then* taught to teach these things to their children ?

What two reasons are given for hearing and doing the commandments ?

What was the promise to the fathers ?

Repeat the *one great command* of this chapter.

Show how many ways are mentioned in which these words of God are to be taught in the family.

How many good things were promised to them in the land ?

What were they to beware of ? Why ?

How is God a *jealous* God ?

How is it right for him to destroy any one from the earth ?

Fourteenth Sunday.

THE FORTY-SECOND PSALM.

To the chief Musician, Maschil, for the sons of Korah.

1. As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.

2. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God : when shall I come and appear before God ?

3. My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God ?

4. When I remember these *things*, I pour out my soul in me : for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday.

5. Why art thou cast down, O my soul ? and *why* art thou disquieted in me ? hope thou in God : for I shall yet praise him *for* the help of his countenance.

6. O my God, my soul is cast down within me : therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar.

7. Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts : all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.

8. *Yet the LORD will command his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.*

9. I will say unto God my rock, Why hast thou forgotten me ? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy ?

10. *As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me ; while they say daily unto me, Where is thy God ?*

11. Why art thou cast down, O my soul ? and why art thou disquieted within me ? hope thou in God : for I shall yet praise him, *who is* the health of my countenance, and my God.

WHAT does 'to the chief musician' mean ?

What is the meaning of 'Mas-chil' ? Maschil is a Hebrew word meaning 'instruction' ; and we suppose means that the psalm is meant especially to give *instruction* to those who read it.

Who are the 'sons of Korah' ?

The only Korah that we know any thing about is the Korah who was destroyed in Moses' time, with two hundred and fifty other persons, for daring to offer strange incense, as you may read in Numbers xvi : 1-35. But in Numbers xxvi : 11, you may see that Korah's children did not die ; and in Saul's time the sons or children of Korah were gate-keepers of the Tabernacle, as the nineteenth verse of I. Chronicles ix shows. Though the father was destroyed, yet the children might have become singers in the Tabernacle worship.

We do not know whether David wrote the psalm or not, but we suppose he did. Some writers think that one of the sons of Korah wrote it.

What is a 'hart' ?

'I have seen large flocks of these panting harts,' says the missionary Thompson, 'gather round the water-brooks in the great deserts of Central Syria, so subdued by thirst that you could approach quite near them before they fled.'

What only can satisfy a thirsty hart ?

What only can satisfy a thirsty soul ?

Explain 'My soul *thirsteth* for God,' and tell whether it is the same as 'panteth for thee, O God.'

What is the difference between 'God' and the 'living God'? *Answer.* One is God in the greatness of his character, and the other God as the source of his soul's life. See the end of the eighth verse.

Think of the difference between water and living water.

Is it true that in ancient times people 'could come and appear before God' at one place more than another? Read Deuteronomy xii: 5-12; I. Kings ix: 3.

Is it true that God is *now* more present in one place than in another?

At what *special* places can we come and appear before God?

'My tears have been my meat': give another figure of speech from the Bible which explains this. Read and explain Psalm lxxx: 5 and cii: 4.

'When one is in great sadness, his tears become in a manner his food; he eats and drinks, as it were, more tears than bread or other food.'

Who is meant by 'they' in 'they say continually'? See the tenth verse.

Why did they say, 'Where is thy God'?

We must think of David, far from the Tabernacle, *driven* away perhaps by Absalom, his enemies taunting him for his piety, and sneeringly asking him where his God is now.

Explain the last part of this verse by Psalms lxxi: 10, 11, and xxii: 7, 8.

His enemies may not be saying these things *all the time*; but to one in such sadness, what they say rings in the ears as if they said it continually.

What things are 'these things' in the fourth verse?

What is it to 'pour out my soul in me'? Read Psalm xxii: 14.

Is 'For I had gone with the multitude' the reason for pouring out his soul or not?

The remembrance of that happy, holy time, when he went with the companies of God's people up to the Tabernacle to worship, praising the Lord with joyful voices—a great multitude of them—fills his heart with sadness.

What is the difference between 'cast down' and 'disquieted' in the fifth verse?

It is as if the soul were another person, whose face is bowed down to the earth with grief, and whose heart is so excited with sorrow that he cannot be quiet.

Does 'hope thou in God' mean 'hope that God will come to deliver,' or 'find all thy hope in God'?

What reason is given why the soul should hope in God?

If a person brings wisdom and cheerfulness and hope in his face, or if his face be the face of a strong, personal friend, then his face gives as real help as his hand or arm.

In reading the sixth verse put the emphasis on 'is.' 'O my God, my soul *is* cast down within me.' He tries to cheer up his soul, but it *is* cast down.

What is the meaning of 'therefore'? *Answer.* Because my soul *is* cast down within me, *for this reason* will I remember thee, etc.

The remedy for discouragement and despondency of heart, then, is *remembrance of God*.

What is meant by 'land of the Jordan'?

Where were 'the Hermonites'?

The Hermonites are the double-headed peak of Mount Hermon across the Jordan, away in the north. Even from these

distant regions will I remember thee, just as David said at another time, 'From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee.'

What was 'the hill Mi-zar'? *Answer.* Mizar means little. We don't know whether there was any hill *named* Mizar or not. It may mean 'from the little hill.'

'If I cannot be on the heights of Jerusalem, and of the hill of Zion, I will remember thee from this little hill where I am.'

If we are kept from the house of God by sickness or affliction, we can say, 'I cannot go up with the great congregation, but I will remember thee from my own little place.'

Explain the figures of speech in the seventh verse.

One billow calleth for another to follow it, and one trouble after another comes upon me, as if each calls the next to follow. Or the roar of the billows responding to the floods of rain, 'the deep' of the sea answering to 'the deep' of the clouds, like the noise of a waterspout, represents the heavy waves of trouble.

In the seventh verse you see nothing but grief and gloom; in the eighth verse hope comes again.

What three things does David predict for himself in the eighth verse?

He can even think of the songs of God's house, although all the waves and billows go over him. When the billows threaten his death, his prayer is unto the God *of life*.

What does he call God in the ninth verse?

How is God a rock in waves and billows?

What enemy is this and why is he mourning?

What is meant by 'as with a sword in my bones'?

Their reproach is as sharp and torturing as if they did it with a sword thrust through my very bones.

What does the last part of this verse show their reproach is?

What are the reasons given in the last verse for hoping in God?

When David shall praise God again in his sanctuary, then he will prove his enemies to be false, and that God is every thing that he said he was.

How does *health* of my countenance differ from *help* of my countenance in the fifth verse?

‘And my God’: He whom he speaks of in the first and second verses only as ‘God’ and ‘*the* living God,’ he now says is ‘*my* God.’

Fifteenth Sunday.

THE FORTY-SIXTH PSALM.

To the chief Musician for the sons of Korah, A Song upon Alamoth.

1. *GOD* is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.
2. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;
3. *Though* the waters thereof roar *and* be troubled, *though* the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.
4. *There is* a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy *place* of the tabernacles of the Most High.
5. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, *and that* right early.
6. The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted.
7. The **LORD** of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.
8. Come, behold the works of the **LORD**, what desolations he hath made in the earth.
9. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire.
10. Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.
11. The **LORD** of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

EXPLAIN the title to the psalm.

‘Upon Alamoth’ means ‘by maidens,’ and A Song by Maidens means, we suppose, by female voices, or, as we would say, A Song to be sung by Soprano or Treble Voices.

This is one of the finest and best of all the psalms. If you will look through it, you will see that it is divided into three parts, and Selah at the end of each part. At the end of the second part and at the end of the third part you will see the same things said as at the *beginning* of the first part.

David did not probably write the psalm. Some writers have thought that it was written and sung first after the great army of Sennacherib, King of Assyria, was destroyed in one night by a plague sent by God. If you will read II. Kings xviii : 13–16, you will see how the king came and how King Hezekiah tried to get rid of him. If you read on to the twenty-fifth verse, you will see how Sennacherib brought his great army against Jerusalem, how his general, Rab-shakeh, insulted God, and, in the nineteenth chapter, how Isaiah told King Hezekiah to be of good courage, and how, when the army came a second time, God smote the army with death.

Some writers think that Isaiah or Hezekiah wrote this psalm then to celebrate the victory.

What does ‘upon Alamoth’ mean ?

When have some persons supposed the psalm was written ?

What is a ‘refuge’ ?

What was a city of refuge ?

What two other things is God said to be in the first verse ?

How is God ‘our strength’ ?

When is he a help ? At no other time ?

‘Therefore will not we fear’ : why ?

You can hardly think of a time when you would be more likely to fear than when the earth is removed and the mountains carried out into the midst of the sea.

What do 'the waters *thereof*' and 'the swelling *thereof*' mean ?

How do the mountains shake with the swelling of the sea ?

You should think of the great ocean rolling in a tempest and striking its heavy blows against the foot of a mountain, so that the very mountain seems to shake. You should think of one who says 'God is my refuge and strength,' sitting without fear and watching calmly the quaking of the earth and the overthrow of mountains, hearing and seeing the roar and dash and foam of the waters. What would you yourself care, if you should be in such a place, if you knew that he who said, 'Peace, be still' on the Lake of Galilee, were by your side and were your friend ?

What city was meant by the 'city of God' ?

What river or stream was there in that city ?

What has the mention of a river here to do with the descriptions in the verses before ?

Although the earth be shaking, the sea roaring, the mountains carried out into the sea, and the whole world in commotion, yet Jerusalem and the Temple shall be so quiet that not even this little brook of Siloah shall be turned out of its course.

In what way does a river make a city glad ?

If this psalm was written in the time of Hezekiah and Isaiah, then there is a striking description of this same river and the same turbulent waters in Isaiah viii : 6, 7, in which the soft, flowing waters of Shiloh represent the peaceful piety at Jerusalem ; and the strong waters of a mighty river, with many channels flowing over all their banks and filling the land of Judah far and wide, represent the King of Assyria coming with his army to overrun the whole country.

Why is 'tabernacles' used and not tabernacle if the Tabernacle is meant ? *Answer.* Because there were many rooms and courts for priests and other persons.

Does 'in the midst of her' mean in the midst of the city or of the tabernacles ?

'She shall not be moved': what two reasons why she shall not be moved, the one before and the other after this middle clause ?

When shall God help her ?

'Right early' might be translated 'at the turning of the morning'; that is, at the very dawn of day. If you think this psalm written after Sennacherib's army was destroyed, and will read Isaiah xxxvii : 36, you will see how God did help his people right early in the morning.

How many separate actions are described in the sixth verse ?

The sixth verse is one of the most vivid and rapid poetical descriptions of the psalms. First you see the heathen—that is, all nations outside Judea—raging with anger, like the Assyrians against God's capital ; then you see the kingdoms moved, the thrones and governments excited against Jerusalem and God ; then you hear God uttering his voice, speaking in a terrible miracle or pestilence, as in Sennacherib's army that night ; then you see the earth, that is, people in all their hearts melting with fear and awe at his power. Nations raging ! kingdoms moving ! God's voice speaking ! the earth melting !

Is God's voice represented as increasing or decreasing the commotion and excitement ?

What does 'Lord of hosts' mean ?

Why is God here called the God of Jacob ?

Notice the contrast between verses six and seven. Verse six represents the dissolving of the world ; verse seven, the security of the kingdom of God. The whole earth is in uproar and confusion ; peoples rage, kingdoms reel ; but that God who decrees plague or earthquake in defence of his people is their protection and help, so that they stand firm and secure amid the general desolations.

If you *really believe* that the Omnipotent God is your own loving Father, is it possible for you to be disturbed?

The third part of the psalm begins with the eighth verse. The commotions are over, and we go out to see the battle-field on which God overthrew his enemies. As if, after Sennacherib's army, or what was left of it, had fled, the people of Jerusalem had gone out to see the dead and the spoil and the weapons of the Assyrian army left behind.

What works of God does the eighth verse call us to come and behold?

Are these 'desolations' the desolations of Sennacherib's army, or all the desolations of war?

Do you understand 'wars to cease unto the end of the earth' to mean that wars had *then* ceased?

The principal nations at that time were Assyria, Egypt, Arabia, Ethiopia. Perhaps they were at peace after Sennacherib was slain: then wars might actually have ceased unto the end of the earth.

What does he do to the bow and spear and chariot?

Do you understand this literally or figuratively?

Perhaps the writer of the psalm is thinking how such a battle-field looked with its pieces of bows and spears and the wooden chariots burning with fire.

Who speaks in the tenth verse?

What special reason is there for keeping silence?

Sennacherib had come with great boasts and with a great army. And yet God, in a single night, destroyed his army and sent him home to be slain by his sons. So easy is it for God to turn man's mighty plans to desolation, so that all people shall see it and be still.

Does 'I will be exalted among the heathen' refer only to the future?

How *was* God exalted among the heathen in the destruction of Sennacherib's army ?

Explain the last verse.

What other two verses of the psalm is it like ?

See how the psalm is bound together in these three like verses, as with three golden girdles. And each girdle has in it two strands, the two strong ideas of the psalm—God our strength and God our refuge.

What great time of the shaking and dissolving of nations is there sure to be in the future ?

Who will be the only safe refuge and strength for us then ?

Sixteenth Sunday.

THE FIFTY-FIRST PSALM.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bath-sheba.

1. HAVE mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness : according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.
2. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.
3. For I acknowledge my transgressions : and my sin *is* ever before me.
4. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done *this* evil in thy sight : that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.
5. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity ; and in sin did my mother conceive me.
6. Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts : and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.
7. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean : wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
8. Make me to hear joy and gladness ; *that* the bones *which* thou hast broken may rejoice.
9. Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities

To whom is this psalm addressed in the title ?

Does this address show that the psalm was intended for public or private use?

David had committed two great and awful crimes—adultery and murder—crimes plainly and boldly against three of the Ten Commandments, the sixth, seventh, and tenth. These crimes were worse in David than in another person, because he was king. Besides, what David had done in bringing the ark to Jerusalem, in the public praise of God in the Tabernacle, led every body to expect that he would be always pure and innocent. And after what God had done for David in making him king, what a horrid and impious crime for David to forget God and break his laws.

Repeat the three commandments which David disobeyed?

Who was the prophet Nathan mentioned in the title?
Read II. Samuel xii : 1-10.

Who was Bath-sheba? Read II. Samuel xi : 3 and xii : 9.

What is the parable which Nathan told David?

What did David say as soon as he knew what the parable meant? See II. Samuel xii : 13.

This psalm, then, is the confession of David for these terrible crimes which he had committed. One of them led to another, until the great and good and tender-hearted David was a cruel murderer.

Who was it that he murdered?

What is the meaning of 'Have mercy'?

Can a person ask for God's mercy who has not sinned?

For what reason does he ask 'Have mercy *according unto thy lovingkindness*'?

Does David, in the second part of the first verse, speak of his guilt as only one sin, or more?

How many wicked thoughts David must have had during all the time that he was planning to kill Uriah; so that he not

only has been guilty of transgressing the sixth, seventh, and tenth commandments, but of many transgressions in thought, word, and deed.

Show the difference between 'lovingkindness and tender mercies.'

David speaks of the multitude of God's tender mercies, as if, if God had not a great multitude of mercies, there would not be enough to pardon the multitude of his sins.

Why does David say, 'Wash me *thoroughly*' and 'cleanse me'? Read Jeremiah ii : 22.

Why does he say 'my *sin*', and not my sins?

Could a person really say this to God and not be in pain on account of his sin?

There was one great sin which was always before him, and all his other sins were small compared with that.

What reason does he give in the third verse *why* his sins should be 'washed' and 'cleansed'?

Is saying 'My sin is ever before me' the same as 'I acknowledge' my transgression?

By saying to God, 'O God, my sin is ever before me: it is always in my thoughts,' he *does* acknowledge to God his *feeling* of sin.

Which comes first in us, forgiveness or the conviction of our sin?

Which comes first, forgiveness or the acknowledgement of our sin?

Is acknowledgement of our sins to God any reason why God should forgive us?

Is the sight of our own sin always before our eyes any reason why we should confess it to God?

What evil is meant by 'this evil' in the fourth verse?

Explain how 'this evil' was done 'against thee, and thee *only*'?

He had been so unthankful and forgetful of God who had

raised him from a poor boy to his throne, that all his great guilt against Uriah seemed little in comparison with his sin against God.

Does the last half of this verse mean, 'I acknowledge my sins' 'that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest to condemn me,' etc., or, 'I have sinned against thee, thee only,' so that it may be seen that thou art 'justified when thou speakest,' etc.?

What does 'justified' mean?

Does 'be *clear*' when 'thou judgest' mean be clear when he judges of David's sin, or when he sits as judge of all things?

In the fifth and sixth verses, he gives a *second reason* why he should be forgiven—because he is by nature sinful and needs to be changed to a holy life.

What is the meaning of 'I was shapen in iniquity'? *Answer.* When my body was formed at the first, I was sinful.

Explain 'In sin did my mother conceive me.' *Answer.* As soon as I was born into the world, I was sinful.

Do you think this verse a proof that we are all born sinful?

Does 'desirest truth' mean only truthfulness of words

What is meant by the 'inward parts' and the 'hidden parts'? *Answer.* The very thoughts of the soul.

Adultery, murder, and coveting are commonly *secret* sins; they are loved and kept in the secret thoughts of the soul.

What does 'make me to know wisdom in the hidden part' mean? *Answer.* As thou dost wish holiness within, so make me wise to be holy within.

What is 'hyssop,' and how was it used in those days? Read Exodus xii : 22; Leviticus xiv : 4-7, 51; and Numbers xix : 6, 18.

'This unseemly shrub, which thrives on rubbish and walls, symbolic of divine condescension, mixed with the noble wood

of the cedar, symbolic of divine majesty, used to be employed in purifying from sin and leprosy. Both the greatness and the condescension of God are needed for the recovery of man.'

Did hyssop itself purify a person ?

When David repented of these sins, would he go to the Tabernacle with hyssop and with washing ?

Is the verse, then, any thing more than the figurative language used in *Isaiah i : 16 and 18* ?

What is meant by '*hearing* joy and gladness' ?

Explain 'the bones which thou hast broken.'

When God showed David how wicked he had been, his wretchedness was as great as if God had broken his bones.

Explain how these broken bones *rejoice* ? Read *Isaiah lxvi : 14*.

Explain the meaning of 'Hide thy face from my sins.'

Show how 'blot out all my iniquities' differs from it.

When he prays that God will hide his face *from his sins*, it is as if there was a book in which his sins are written, from which he prays God to turn away his face. When he prays that God will blot them out, he prays that the record of them on the pages may be destroyed.

Seventeenth Sunday.

THE FIFTY-FIRST PSALM.

10. Create in me a clean heart, O God ; and renew a right spirit within me.

11. Cast me not away from thy presence ; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.

12. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation ; and uphold me *with thy* free Spirit.

13. *Then* will I teach transgressors thy ways ; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

14. Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation : and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.

15. O Lord, open thou my lips ; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

16. For thou desirest not sacrifice ; else would I give *it* : thou delightest not in burnt offering.

17. The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit : a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

18. Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion : build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

19. Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering : then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

David had prayed that his *past* sins might be blotted out. Now he prays that his heart might be made new, so that he would not commit *future* sins.

Does 'create in me a clean heart' mean simply that an unclean heart be made clean, or that an entirely new heart be created ?

If God should hide his face from our sins and blot out all our iniquities, would there then be any need to have a new heart created in us ?

If all past sins are taken away and we still have a bad heart, more sins will come again unless the heart be changed.

Can we get a new heart without God creating it in us ?

Will God create it in us unless we are willing ?

What is meant by 'a right spirit' ?

Does 'renew' show that he had had a right spirit before ?

What are the two parts of the eleventh verse ?

Was the Holy Spirit given in David's time ? Read John vii : 39.

It was because he forgot that God's presence and Spirit only could keep him that he fell into sin ; and, *therefore*, when he recovered, he might well cry, 'Cast me not away from thy presence ; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.'

Does 'the joy of thy salvation' mean the pleasure of knowing that he is saved, or the pleasures of that *life* which begins with being forgiven ?

What does 'Restore' show about his having had this joy before ?

What does 'uphold me' show that he feared ?

In the first and second verses of the psalm we see what *sorrow* for sin is ; in the third and fourth verses we see what *confession* of sin is ; in the fifth and sixth verses we see *how sinful* sin is ; in the seventh, eighth, and ninth verses we see that sin *may be forgiven* ; and from the tenth verse to the twelfth we see that we may be *kept* from *further* sin.

What is the one thing spoken of, then, in all the verses ?

Notice now that in the rest of the psalm David speaks of what he *expects to do after* he is pardoned.

'Then will I teach' : when ?

'Transgressors' : transgressors of what ?

The word *transgressor* means a person who *goes over* a boundary or line, and the ways of God are the lines or boundaries which God has marked out within which we should walk. To 'teach transgressors thy ways' is to teach those who have gone over the boundaries to come back and walk within them.

What is a sinner ?

What does 'converted' mean ?

Do you think a person is converted who never thinks of leading others to love and serve God ?

What does 'Deliver me from blood-guiltiness' refer to ? Read II. Samuel xii : 9.

You can see, too, from II. Samuel xi : 14-17, that other persons besides Uriah may have been killed in obedience to David's command.

What does David call God in this verse ?

When David thinks of his great crimes of murder and of the greatness of God's goodness in redeeming him, his heart flows out in large admiration of God as the wonderful God of his salvation.

'And my tongue shall sing': for what reason would it sing?

It would sing of what?

Does he mean that God's *righteousness* would be shown in delivering him from blood-guiltiness?

Repeat the fifteenth verse, putting the emphasis on 'thou.'

Does opening the lips mean giving the power to speak words, or the power to speak exalted praise in songs and worship?

It is as if David had said, 'O Lord, if thou open my lips to praise thee, then indeed shall my mouth give such praise as is due to thee.'

How is it that God does not desire sacrifice, when he himself had given the commands to sacrifice?

Explain the 'For' at the beginning of the verse.

It is as if it was written in this way: 'and my mouth shall show forth thy praise. *For* it is true praise thou dost require, and not mere sacrifice.'

How did burnt-offering differ from sacrifice?

Some sacrifices were *offered* or presented in the Tabernacle and Temple to God and then taken away, but burnt-offerings were animals entirely burnt upon the altar.

Did not God delight in burnt-offering when he himself commanded it?

What does 'The sacrifices of God' mean?

What is a 'broken spirit'?

A *spirited* person often means a wilful person; that is, a person whose will is held firm and strong against others. A broken will is a broken spirit. When horses are trained to go in the harness, we say they are *broken* to the harness. We mean their will or their spirit is broken, and that they are subdued and gentle.

What is the difference between 'broken' and 'contrite'?

Why will not God despise a broken and contrite spirit ?

But most *men* will despise a broken and contrite spirit ; they like to see *spirit* or *independence*, and have contempt for a lowly and humble spirit.

See now how, in the last two verses, David wishes the Church to be prospered as well as himself.

What is meant by Zion ?

David was the chief leader of the praises of Zion, and his wicked sin might bring reproach and contempt from the people on the divine worship. God might even destroy it for the king's great sin. But David now feels so sure that he is forgiven that he ventures to pray that Zion may be pleasant unto God and Jerusalem may be enlarged.

What is meant by 'building the walls of Jerusalem' ?
What are 'sacrifices of righteousness' ?

When animals were sacrificed by persons who had no heart in the sacrifice, but who thought only of the animal and of killing and burning it, they were *unrighteous* or *hypocritical* sacrifices. But sacrifices which had prayer and a sincere heart with them were sacrifices of righteousness.

What is the difference between burnt-offering and whole burnt-offering ? Read I. Samuel vii : 9.

But what is the victim for *our* burnt-offering ? Read Hebrews ix : 28 and John i : 29.

Eighteenth Sunday.

THE SIXTY-SEVENTH PSALM.

To the chief Musician on Neginoth, A Psalm or Song.

1. God be merciful unto us, and bless us ; and cause his face to shine upon us. Selah.
2. That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.

3. Let the people praise thee, O God ; let all the people praise thee.
4. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy : for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah.
5. Let the people praise thee, O God ; let all the people praise thee.
6. *Then* shall the earth yield her increase ; and God, even our own God, shall bless us.
7. God shall bless us ; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.

THIS psalm is one of the psalms, it is thought, which was sung in the Tabernacle and Temple on the Hebrews' Thanksgiving Day. The day of Thanksgiving or days of Thanksgiving were the Feast of Tabernacles, which lasted eight days. We should think of the caravans of people coming up to Jerusalem in the month of October, from north, south, east, and west, through all the land. The early crops and fruits—like barley, grapes, and olives—are ripe, and it is the beginning of harvest. The people bring a bunch or basket of the first fruits that are ripe. As they come within the walls of Jerusalem they begin to build little houses or tents of green branches to live in while they are in the city. The city people too come out of their houses, and build these little green-branch houses to live in themselves. And at length, by the beginning of the feast, the city is crowded full of these little green booths, till we see them along every street, and on the flat house-tops, and on the walls, and even outside the walls. And during all that happy week of thanks to God for his goodness through the year, the people gather in great congregations in the Temple ; and in their worship they sing such psalms as this.

When is it supposed that this psalm was sung ?

Describe the Feast of Tabernacles.

'Neg-i-noth' means stringed instruments. And the title means, To the leader of the stringed instruments in the temple choir.

In the first verse does the psalmist speak *of* God or *to* God ?

What blessing is here repeated as a prayer ? Read Numbers vi : 23-25.

Show the difference between the three parts of the

verse: 'Be merciful unto us,' 'bless us,' 'cause thy face to shine upon us.'

Light shines from the face of a friend, when he loves us and is doing us favor; his face is dark when he frowns, or is displeased. Read Psalm xxxi: 16; lxxxix: 15.

What does 'Selah' mean?

What is the meaning of 'thy way'? Read Psalm ciii: 7; Isaiah lv: 8.

It is a common thing to hear a person speak of *his way* of doing any thing; or say, 'My way is different from your way.' Sometimes 'my way' means simply my manner of doing a thing, and sometimes it means my whole conduct.

Was not God's way known on earth before the psalmist prayed this prayer?

What does 'saving health' mean?

What is opposite to 'health'? to 'saving health'?

What proof can you bring from the Scriptures that the soul is diseased?

What proof can you bring that this destructive disease of the soul is among all nations?

How can this saving health be brought to the souls diseased?

Is the third verse a prayer or an ascription of praise to God?

Does it mean the people of Judea or the people of the earth?

Does it mean, 'Let all the people praise thee in gladness,' or, 'Let them by their overthrow show how just and excellent thou art'?

Does it mean praise thee for salvation or for thy excellence?

What difference is there between 'the nations' and 'the people' in the third and fourth verses?

You can hardly think of a more happy sight than of all the different nations, full of gladness in their different lands, and singing for joy at the thought of God's goodness and love.

Does true religion give gladness to people or not ?

What is the reason given in this verse why the nations should be glad, and sing for joy ?

What is the difference between *judging* and *governing* the people ?

Explain 'judge the people *righteously*.'

Why is the fact that God is a righteous judge, and is Governor of nations, a glad and happy thing ?

Is it a glad and happy thing to those who do not yield to him ?

Can you give any reason why the exact words of the third verse are repeated in the fifth verse ?

The praise of all the nations seems to David such a glad and happy thing, and God seems to him so good and worthy of all praise, that he says over again out of his full and happy heart: 'Oh ! that this *were* so ! Oh ! let them sing unto thee ! *Let* the people praise thee, O God ; let *all* the people praise thee.'

What is the 'increase' of the earth ?

'*Then* shall the earth yield her increase': will the earth yield any better increase of fruits and crops and flowers when all people praise God ? Why ?

The sixth verse might be translated, 'The earth *has* yielded her increase'; and, if that is the true meaning of it, then the psalm would seem to show that the psalm was sung after the harvest was gathered.

What proofs can you give that thanksgiving for a fruitful soil and good harvests is especially pleasing to God ?

Can you prove that the fruit and the good seasons are designed by God to give us gladness ? See Acts xiv : 17.

What is meant by 'bless us' ? Read Leviticus xxvi : 3, 4 ; and Hosea xiv : 6-9.

'God, even *our own* God': is God any more the God of one people than of another ?

Why is 'God shall bless us' repeated in the last verse ?

What are 'all the ends of the earth' ?

Does fear him mean be afraid of him or reverence him ?

Will *all the ends* of the earth fear him on account of the blessing on the *Hebrew nation* ?

It is as if David had said, 'And because God shall bless us, therefore all the ends of the earth shall fear him.'

Perhaps this psalm was sung in responses—one part of the choir answering to another. You can see how easily it might be sung so, with great spirit and beauty and power. If you think of one voice or one part of the choir in the temple singing the first verse, another voice or part of the choir singing the second verse, and a chorus singing the third verse, then of the first voice singing the fourth verse, and the chorus again the fifth verse, and then the second voice singing the sixth verse, and the chorus ending the psalm, you can feel how the swelling hearts of the people would be lifted up in high thanksgiving for the fruits and crops of their good land.

Nineteenth Sunday.

THE EIGHTY-FOURTH PSALM.

To the chief Musician upon Gittith, A Psalm for the sons of Korah.

1. How amiable are thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts.
2. My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD : my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.
3. Yea, the sparrow hath found a house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O LORD of hosts, my King, and my God.
4. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house : they will be still praising thee. Selah.
5. Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee ; in whose heart are the ways of them.
6. Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well ; the rain also filleth the pools.
7. They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appear-eth before God.

WE do not know the exact meaning of Gittith. We suppose that it means a musical instrument of some kind, which was called Gittith either because the Gitti, who lived in Gath, used it, or because it was shaped like a *wine-press*, which is the meaning of Gath and Gitti in Hebrew. It is supposed that it was a joyful and lively instrument.

Whoever wrote this psalm speaks in the ninth verse of himself as the *anointed*; that is, as the anointed king. It was very likely David himself.

There are two parts to the psalm. The first seven verses are a praise of God's house; the last five verses are a prayer that God will hear and bless him in his house.

What is the meaning of Gittith?

Explain the 'chief Musician upon Gittith'?

Who were 'the sons of Korah'?

Who wrote the psalm?

What are '*amiable*' tabernacles?

We mean by an *amiable* person a sweet-tempered or even-tempered and gentle person. A house or a tabernacle cannot be, of course, sweet-tempered and gentle. But it may be so associated in our minds with sweet and gentle thoughts that it has the same influence on us as a sweet-tempered and gentle person.

What is meant by 'Lord of *hosts*'?

Does courts of the Lord mean the courts about the Tabernacle or the whole house of God?

Show the difference between 'longeth for' and 'fainteth for.'

Show the difference between 'my soul' and 'my heart and my flesh.'

Notice how these three things together express and contain the whole nature of man.

Which is the most intense expression of desire for God's house, 'longeth for' or 'fainteth for' or 'crieth out for'?

Explain the meaning of 'living God.' Remember the forty-second psalm.

Can the soul be satisfied without having the life of God communicated to it?

Describe the difference between 'a sparrow' and a 'swallow.'

Which is more a house-bird than the other?

Would sparrows or swallows be allowed to build their nests exactly on or under the altars?

David does not mean, we suppose, exactly on or about the altars, but in the buildings which contained the altars. All the buildings together were like *one altar unto God.* 'The walls of the Tabernacle were wooden, a yard deep, hung with carpets, and over these was a double leather-hanging. The courts contained columns with caps where birds might easily build their nests.' The missionary Thompson says the sparrows hold very fast their right to the 'place where they have nestled, and have not the least reverence for any place or thing. David alludes to these characteristics of the sparrow when he complains that they had appropriated even the altars of God for their nests.'

But why is it that David speaks at all of the nests of swallows in the sanctuary?

Because he was away from the Tabernacle, and his soul longed to fly to the Tabernacle as a bird flies to her nest in the Tabernacle walls. He thinks that, as a little bird is at home, warm and happy in her nest, so his soul is at home and peace and rest in God's house.

What does the swallow leave in her nest which shows that she feels her nest is safe?

'Like a little bird, which, after a long wandering, has a nest to dwell in and to which it may trust its dearest thing, her young, so have I, a poor wanderer, found safety and protection in thy house, O Lord of hosts.'

Explain the difference between 'Lord of hosts' and 'my King' and 'my God.'

David the king calls God *his* king—a noble example to his people.

David gives thanks, as if he said: ‘My soul, a poor little bird, has now found its right house and rest, namely, thy altars; and if it had not found God’s amiable house, I must have been forever flying about out of the right way’—like an owl in the desert, like a lonely turtle-dove.

What is the meaning of ‘blessed’?

What persons were there, then, who dwelt in God’s house?

What does ‘*still* praising thee’ mean? *Answer.* Continually praising thee.

Explain ‘whose strength is in thee.’

The strength of a child may be in his father’s protection: the strength of a general may be in his army: the strength of a king in his subjects: the strength of a subject in his king. The strength of a rich man may be in the bank where he leaves his money: the strength of a writer in the books which he has written: the strength of a farmer in his lands: and surely the strength of a worshipper is in God’s house.

What words at the end of this verse are printed in *italic*? Why?

If you leave off the words ‘of them,’ then the meaning of the last part of the verse probably is ‘in whose heart are the ways,’ the ways which lead up to God’s house; that is, who are fondly thinking of going up along the roads to Jerusalem and the Tabernacle. And then leaving off the ‘*who*’ from the next verse, the verse begins a new sentence, and it will read ‘Passing through the valley of Baca, on their way up to Zion, they make it a well.’

The valley of Baca is supposed to have been some valley through which the travellers up to Jerusalem passed. There is an old story that the Arabian Baca-tree, when its leaf is cut, gives out a tear of sap; and some persons have supposed the valley of Baca means the valley of Baca-trees. The word Baca

means weeping, and whether the verse means valley of Baca-trees, that is, weeping trees or the valley of weeping, the meaning is really the same.

The meaning is, that those whose strength is in God, though they go through the valley of weeping, make their very tears a well of water to their thirsty hearts.

Explain the meaning of 'valley of Baca.'

What other valley does David speak of in one of his psalms? See Psalm xxiii : 4.

Could he make *that* valley turn to joy?

'The rain also filleth the pools': not only do such persons find a refreshing well where others weep as if in a dry and thirsty land, but they are as joyful as if the rain had watered the earth, left the pools standing full of water, and the whole valley green and beautiful. 'Pilgrims forget the scanty supply at the inn when they have abundance in view; Israelites going up to the Passover made light of deficient water, for their hearts were set on Jerusalem.'

Explain 'the rain also filleth the pools.'

What is the reason why such persons turn every trouble to pleasure?

Hardly any thing will trouble you on a journey if your heart is full of the happy place to which you are going.

What does 'they go from strength to strength' mean?

Verse fifth spoke of 'the man whose *strength* is in thee.' But as he goes up to Jerusalem and to the Tabernacle, he gains one degree of strength after another. He rises step by step in strength, just as he goes step by step out of the valley up the mountains toward Jerusalem.

'Every one of them': every one of *whom*?

'Appeareth in Zion before God': explain it.

Every such traveller *will come* to Jerusalem and to God's house, and, appearing before God in his sanctuary, will praise him there.

Twentieth Sunday.

THE EIGHTY-FOURTH PSALM.

8. O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer: give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah.

9. Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed.

10. For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

11. For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good *thing* will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

12. O LORD of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.

Recite the psalm from the beginning.

The second part of the psalm begins with the eighth verse. It is a prayer after the praise of the first part. See how, as his heart swells with the spirit of devotion, he enlarges his address to God. At first he said, 'O Lord of hosts'; but now, as if he was dwelling upon every word he utters, 'O—Lord—God—of—hosts.'

When he says 'hear my prayer,' does he mean hear always my prayer when I offer it in thy courts, or, hear my prayer which I now offer to thee?

Describe the attitude of the body which is represented by 'give ear.'

What is meant by 'O God of Jacob'? *Answer.* O God who wast Jacob's God in his journeys and blessed him in his prosperous life.

David's glowing thoughts have gone up with the caravan of worshippers from height to height to Jerusalem and entered the Temple, and now he begins to pray as if he were really there in body.

Do you think God of Jacob means here God of the people of Jacob, as God of Israel means God of the children of Israel?

Explain the attitude which is represented by ‘Behold, O God.’

Why is God called ‘our shield’? See Psalm iii : 3.

Who is meant by ‘thine anointed’? See I. Samuel xvi : 12, 13.

Explain ‘look upon the face of thine anointed.’

Look down, O Lord, on my humble face which looks up imploring unto thee.

‘A day in thy courts is better than a thousand’: a thousand *what*?

What kind of position was that of doorkeeper in the Tabernacle?

Who once was doorkeeper there? See I. Samuel iii : 15.

What position did he hold who said this?

What is meant by ‘tents of wickedness’? *Answer.* The tents of rich and powerful men who were wicked.

There were no tents of rich and powerful men to which King David might not go and where they would not have been glad to have the king dwell. ‘The idea, perhaps, is that he would rather stand at the door of God’s house and look in (which was all that the worshippers in the Tabernacle could do) than dwell in the interior of tents or houses where wickedness prevailed.’

How is God ‘a sun’?

‘A pious heart, under the influence of God, receives from him what the sun gives to the body—light, warmth, and joy.’

How is God ‘a shield’? Read Psalm v : 12.

How was he a shield to David when Goliath fought with him?

What is ‘grace’? what is ‘glory’?

How does God give them to men?

Does the last part of the verse mean that he always gives good things to those who walk uprightly?

How, then, do you explain the fact that the good do have much to suffer?

Explain 'them that walk uprightly.'

'The Lord is all brightness and no gloom and all safety. He gives honor and glory. He leaves not one unsatisfied wish.'

Do you think that David said the last 'O Lord of hosts' with the same feeling with which he said 'O Lord of hosts' in the first verse?

Show the difference between the last part of this verse and the first part of the fifth verse.

Is it possible for a person to trust in God who is not sorry for his sins?

Is it possible for a person not to be content and happy who is really trusting in God?

Not one in that kingdom but ever sings, 'Blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.'

If you will now look over the psalm, you will see that it is a very beautiful one for the Hebrew people to sing, as they went up from the country to Jerusalem to their celebrations or feasts of worship. And it might, when sung on the way, be called 'The Pilgrim's Song on his way to the Holy City.'

See the company as they start out on their camels and mules; see them as their train winds over the hill toward Jerusalem, singing, 'How amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of hosts': 'Blessed are they that dwell in thy house.' Then comes the Selah, when they go on a long way in silence. And then hear them, 'Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee.' Hear them as they go through the valleys and up one hill after another singing, 'Passing through the valley of Baca, they make it a well,' and 'They go from strength to strength. Hear them repeat all the changes of the chant until there is another long silence. Then, as they come near to Jerusalem, filled with glad thoughts of their God and their fathers' God, hear them, winding up the last height, sing, 'O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.'

What are the two parts of this psalm ?

Show how it might be sung as a pilgrim's song on the way up to the holy city.

What is it that makes trusting in God 'blessed' ?

If a child had gotten out of the habit of trusting in his father by disobeying him, how is he to get back into the blessed trust in him ?

How, then, are we to learn the blessed trust in God ?

Twenty-first Sunday.

A PART OF SOLOMON'S PRAYER AT THE DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE.

I. KINGS.

CHAPTER VIII.

22. AND Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD, in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven ;

23. And he said, LORD God of Israel, *there is* no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart ;

24. Who hast kept with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him : thou spakest also with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled *it* with thine hand, as *it is* this day.

25. Therefore now, LORD God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him, saying, There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel ; so that thy children take heed to their way, that they walk before me, as thou hast walked before me.

26. And now, O God of Israel, let thy word, I pray thee, be verified, which thou spakest unto thy servant David my father.

27. But will God indeed dwell on the earth ? Behold, the heaven, and heaven of heavens, cannot contain thee ; how much less this house that I have builded.

KING SOLOMON had been seven years building the Temple. And now that great and beautiful building was completed. There had been thousands of stone-cutters at work quarrying

and squaring the stone for the foundation, and thousands more of wood-cutters at work in the forests of Lebanon, who cut and hewed cedar timber and fir timber for the building. And while the building was going up, through all the seven years, it was the great thing talked of throughout the land. It was most splendidly ornamented: covered with figures of trees and flowers and angels, enriched with beautiful precious stones; the curtains were blue and purple and crimson; the walls were covered with pure gold. And now, after the seven years' work was done, the king invited the nation to Jerusalem to dedicate the Temple to their God. The dedication was in October, at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles. That Feast lasted seven days, but Solomon made this dedication feast fourteen days long. What a magnificent sight it must have been! All Jerusalem crowded with people, the city filled with the little green-branch houses, the beautiful Temple shining in the sunlight, the priests sacrificing, the multitude of singers praising, the trumpets and psalteries and harps sounding, and, in the midst of it all, that wisest and most splendid king offering this prayer in dedication unto God.

Where did Solomon stand when he offered this prayer?

On what did he stand? Read II. Chronicles vi : 13.

What had they been doing at the altar? I. Kings viii : 5.

What did they place within the innermost part of the Temple? I. Kings viii : 4, 6-9.

How many priests went in with the ark and how were they clothed? II. Chronicles v : 12.

What happened when the priests came out? Read I. Kings viii : 10, 11; II. Chronicles v : 13 and 14.

What two things did the king do before offering this prayer? See I. Kings viii : 12, 13, and 14.

Were the congregation standing or sitting? See the fourteenth verse.

All around the Temple-Building was a large open space, the court of the Temple, with a floor probably of marble, and the

crowds of people filled this court and the porches, while the king stood on his platform of brass near the altar and near the priests.

Did King Solomon stand or kneel when he prayed? See II. Chronicles vi : 12, 13, and verse 54 of this chapter.

Why did he spread forth his hands toward heaven?
Answer. To show the greatness and majesty of that God whom he was addressing.

Is there any account in the Scriptures of any person *sitting* in time of prayer? Read II. Samuel vii : 18 and 27.

This prayer of Solomon is too long to have the whole of it in this book, but any scholar who can would do well to learn the whole of it.

What is the first thing which Solomon says about God in his prayer?

Think of all the multitude standing silent after the ark had been carried in and the glory of God had appeared, and the voice of Solomon now heard by all the vast congregation as he solemnly says, O—Jehovah,—God—of—Israel,—there—is—no God—like—unto—thee.

What thing, in the last part of the verse, does Solomon speak of in respect to which there is no God like unto Jehovah?

What is it to 'keep covenant' and to 'keep mercy'?

With whom does God keep covenant and mercy?

What is it to *walk before* God with *all the heart*?

With what one of his servants does Solomon say, in the twenty-fourth verse, that God *had* kept covenant and mercy?

What was it that God had promised to Solomon's father? Read II. Samuel vii : 12–16.

Notice that there were two parts of the promise to David first, that David should have his son to be king after his own death; secondly, that his son should build a house for God to dwell in.

What had David himself wished to do ? Read II. Samuel vii : 1, 2 ; and I. Kings v : 2, 3.

How had God fulfilled with his hand what he had spoken with his mouth ?

‘As it is this day,’ or, we might say, as it is seen this day. The beautiful Temple before their eyes, the glory of the Lord within it, driving out the priests, were the *proof* that God had kept his promise.

If God *had* kept his promise, why does Solomon, in the twenty-fifth verse, pray God *to* keep it ?

First Solomon praises God because he had kept the promise, and then he prays *because* He had kept it, *therefore* he would continue to keep it.

What is the meaning of ‘There *shall not fail* thee a man to sit on the throne’ ?

What does ‘*so that* thy children take heed’ mean ? See how David understood it in chapter ii : 4.

Did God promise that David’s descendants should be kings on the throne *unless* they tried to obey him ?

Is the thing prayed for in the twenty-sixth verse different from that prayed for in the twenty-fifth verse ?

What does ‘*verified*’ mean ? *Answer.* Made true.

It is as if he had said: Keep thy promise and let thy word come true by fulfilling it.

How could the promise now be verified in respect to the house of God ?

What reason is there in the twenty-seventh verse why God could not dwell in the Temple ?

But does not God dwell in the earth and in earthly houses consecrated to him ? Read Exodus xxv : 8 ; xxix : 45 ; Numbers xxxv : 34.

What promise had God given to Solomon in respect to dwelling in the house which he was building ? I. Kings vi : 11-14.

When Solomon lifted up his thoughts to Jehovah in prayer, and began to think who it was whom he was addressing, he was filled with sublime conceptions of God's greatness, and condescension: This great God whom the wide heavens cannot contain promises to dwell in this little house! How the splendor of the beautiful and great Temple fades away before the greatness and splendor of that Being who condescends to dwell in it.

Twenty-second Sunday.

KING SOLOMON'S PRAYER.

I. KINGS.

CHAPTER VIII.

28. Yet have thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer which thy servant prayeth before thee to-day:

29. That thine eyes may be opened toward this house night and day, even toward the place of which thou hast said, My name shall be there: that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall make toward this place.

30. And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place: and hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place: and when thou hearest, forgive.

31. If any man trespass against his neighbor, and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and the oath come before thine altar in this house:

32. Then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness.

33. When thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee, and shall turn again to thee, and confess thy name, and pray, and make supplication unto thee in this house:

34. Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which thou gavest unto their fathers.

What two things has Solomon already prayed for? *Answer.*
That God would keep a son of David on the throne, and that he would make the house built, *his own house.*

What is it that made God's condescension seem great in having a house built for him ?

Why does he say, 'Yet have thou respect' ? *Answer.* *Although* the heavens are not great enough to contain thee, *yet* do thou hear my prayer to come and dwell in this house.

What is the difference between 'a prayer' and 'a supplication' ?

What is the difference between 'have respect unto the prayer' and 'hearken unto the cry' ?

What is it he wishes when he wishes 'that thine eyes may be opened toward this house' ?

Solomon prays that God would 'hearken unto the cry'; that is, that his ear would be open to any one praying in that temple ; and that his 'eyes may be open,' that is, that he would look with favor upon that house, and those who worship there.

Of what place had God ever said, 'My name shall be there' ? Read Deuteronomy xii : 10, 11.

What does 'toward the place' mean ?

Whose prayer besides his own does he ask in the thirtieth verse God to hear ?

What is God's own proper dwelling-place ?

God is everywhere present through all the universe and through all eternity ; and yet he teaches us in the Scriptures that there is some place called heaven from which he sends forth his commands, and at which he hears the prayers of his creatures. God has a throne, and Jesus is our interceding high-priest before that throne.

What does Solomon wish him to do when he hears ?

Are all prayers prayers for forgiveness ?

Read now the next two verses, and tell for whom it is that Solomon prays next.

What is it 'to trespass against a neighbor' ? Read Exodus xxii : 9.

What 'oath was laid upon him' ?

If a man complained that his neighbor had injured him, and his neighbor denied it, then he could bring the neighbor to the Temple, and have him take a solemn oath before God that he had not done him injury. Read Exodus xxii : 10, 11. If he took the solemn oath that he had not injured him, then the man who complained was to be satisfied, and let him go free.

Explain now the last part of the verse.

If such an oath was taken at the temple altar, what did Solomon pray God to do ?

What does 'hear thou' 'and do' mean ?

It is as if he said, When thou hearest, then *act*, or then do thou proceed to act thy part as the One who is to decide between them. Do not care for this house which we dedicate, just as thou carest for all places ; but when they come to *this* altar *hear*. And when thou hearest, do not be indifferent and do not delay, but decide at once the right and the wrong of it because they have come before thee in thine own house.

Does 'judge thy servants' mean pronounce a decision with a voice there in the temple, or judge in thine own mind between them ?

Does 'thy servants' mean the two men who come or all who come there ?

Does 'condemning the wicked' and 'justifying the righteous' mean condemning the one of the two who is wicked, and justifying the one of them who is right, or condemning all who are wicked and justifying all who are righteous ?

How does he 'bring his way upon his head' ?

How does he 'give him according to his righteousness' ?

Does Solomon mean to pray that God would punish and reward them at once while they are before the altar ?

For whom does Solomon pray in the next two verses ?

Does 'smitten down before the enemy' mean when

they have gone beyond their land to fight, or when the enemy have come into their land ?

What reason is given why they might be smitten before the enemy ?

Had God ever punished the people by bringing enemies into their land ? Read Judges ii : 11 and 14 ; iii : 7, 8, and 12-14.

What four things would they do when God would hear them according to Solomon's prayer ?

How is 'confess thy name' different from confessing sin ?

What two things did he pray God to do when he heard ?

Does the last part of the verse mean that they should be brought back into a land from which they were carried out, or that the land should be restored which would be taken away ?

Had the nation ever been restored after repenting ? Read Judges iii : 9-15 ; x : 10-12 ; I. Samuel xii : 10.

Twenty-third Sunday.

KING SOLOMON'S PRAYER.

I. KINGS.

CHAPTER VIII.

35. When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee ; if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou afflictest them :

36. Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, that thou teach them the good way wherein they should walk, and give rain upon thy land which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance.

37. If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, or if there be caterpillar ; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities ; whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness *there be* ;

38. What prayer and supplication soever be *made* by any man, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands toward this house :

39. Then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest ; (for thou, *even* thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men ;)

40. That they may fear thee all the days that they live in the land which thou gavest unto our fathers.

What is the third thing in his prayer, in the next two verses, for which Solomon prays ?

Did God ever make any special promise of rain as a blessing ? Read Leviticus xxvi : 3-5 ; Deuteronomy xi : 13-15 ; xxviii : 12.

Did he ever threaten to withhold the rain as a curse ? Read Deuteronomy xxviii : 23, 24 ; Zechariah xiv : 17.

Why was the absence of rain worse in that country than in ours ?

Think what a terrible thing it was in that country to have no rain. The hot winds from the southern and western deserts came sweeping up over the land, scorching and withering every green thing, and sweeping the dust and fine sand over fields and houses and men.

'And turn from their sin, when thou *afflict*est them' : what, then, is affliction sometimes designed for ?

Is it *always* designed to turn us from sin ?

What three things does Solomon pray to be given when God hears them pray for rain ?

Notice that they have sinned and the rain is withheld : now Solomon does not simply pray that their sin may be forgiven and rain be sent, but that they may be *taught* so that they will not sin again.

What is meant by 'the good way wherein they should walk' ? Read I. Samuel xii : 23.

What is an 'inheritance' ?

From whom did the people inherit that land ?

See how Solomon appeals to God to take care of the land which he had taken pains to give to this people. He does not

say: And give *them* rain; but 'give rain unto *thy* land which *thou* hast given to *thy people* for an inheritance.'

'Forgive,' 'teach,' 'give rain,' and each supplication Solomon makes as a personal appeal to God's love: Forgive *thy people*; teach them *thy good way*; give rain to *thy land*, thine own gift to *thy people*.

Which one is the strongest of these three appeals?

What is the fourth thing in his prayer—in the next four verses—for which the king prays?

Explain the difference between 'famine,' 'pestilence,' 'blasting,' 'mildew,' 'locust,' and 'caterpillar.'

'Blasting' is the destruction of the tender bud or blossom of a plant by too much moisture, too much heat, or too much cold. A sharp, cold wind, a strong, hot wind, frost, or rain blast the tender blossom so that no fruit grows. A single hot wind on the opened buds in the East might blast thousands and millions of plants in the fields of grain and orchards and vineyards. See how the wind blasted the grain in Genesis xli : 6. 'Mildew' is a thin white coating of decay which covers leaves and plants when they have been wet too long. How easy it is for Him to send a little too much cold or heat or rain or dew or cloud or fog!

How do the locust and caterpillar destroy differently from blasting and mildew?

'With the burning south winds there come from the interior of Arabia and from the most southern parts of Persia clouds of locusts. We saw them twice: the whole atmosphere filled on all sides and to a great height by an innumerable quantity of these insects, whose flight was slow and uniform, and whose noise resembled that of rain. The sky was darkened and the light of the sun considerably weakened. In a moment the terraces of the houses, the streets, and all the fields were covered by these insects, and in two days they had nearly devoured the leaves of the plants.' You may see how they devour and how they darken the sun in Exodus x : 14, 15.

Were these things ever threatened against those who displeased God ? See Deuteronomy xxviii : 21, 22.

Does 'the land of their cities' mean simply cities ?

Does 'whatsoever plague' refer back to the famine, pestilence, blasting, etc., or is it something still different ?

In what other way can you express 'what prayer and supplication soever' ?

Does 'which' refer to 'prayer and supplication,' or to 'man' or to 'people of Israel' ?

What does 'plague of his own heart' mean ?

Show the significance of 'spread forth his hands toward this house.'

What three things does Solomon ask God to do when he hears ?

Show the force of 'and do.'

The meaning of the middle part of the verse will be clearer if you read it in this way: 'and give to every man, whose heart thou knowest, according to his ways.'

Prove from other passages of Scripture that God knows the hearts of all. See I. Chronicles xxviii : 9 ;

Psalm cxxxix : 1-4 ; Jeremiah xvii : 10 ; Acts i : 24.

What reason does Solomon urge—in the fortieth verse—why God should 'forgive and do and give' ?

What is it which will lead to the fear, forgiveness, or the giving to every man according to his ways ? Read Psalm cxxx : 4.

How does forgiveness lead to a loving fear of God ?

How would living in the land which God gave unto their fathers lead them to fear God ?

Any land or place or house in which God had done his wonderful works by his miracles, as at Sinai and in Judea ; by his providence, as in our own country ; by his Spirit, as in our church buildings, is full of powerful associations to help us fear him. And if for many years it has been so, so that we can say, Here God did his wonderful deeds among our fathers, the

land or city or village or house will have great power over us to help us fear God.

Turn now to your Bible and tell what is the next thing—the fifth thing—for which Solomon prays in the next three verses.

Does he ask the same things for strangers as for his own people or not?

What is the sixth thing which he prays for in the last part of the prayer—from the forty-fourth verse onward?

What reason does he urge again why the people should be forgiven? Read verses 51, 52, 53.

What did King Solomon do after he had finished his prayer?

What did he and the people do after that? Verses 62, 63.

How long a time did they continue to celebrate? Verse 65.

How did the people go away? Verse 66.

There is no such gladness of heart and no such fulness of joy on earth as in the great times of rejoicing, in great assemblies of pious and cheerful people. The heart is borne up as if by a great ocean of sublime and happy thoughts and feeling. And this is the gladness of true piety; the same kind of pleasure which will be in heaven, when all who are there will go to do God's errands 'joyful and glad of heart.'

Twenty-fourth Sunday.

GOD'S ADDRESS OUT OF THE WHIRLWIND.

JOB.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

1. THEN the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,
2. Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?
3. Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.
4. Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding.
5. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?

6. Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened ? or who laid the corner-stone thereof ;

7. When the morning-stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy ?

8. Or *who* shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth *as if* it had issued out of the womb ?

9. When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling-band for it,

10. And brake up for it my decreed *place*, and set bars and doors,

11. And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further ; and here shall thy proud waves be staid ?

Who was Job ? Read Job i : 1.

Where did he live ?

The land of Uz was probably somewhere in Arabia, and Job probably lived before Moses, or near Moses's time. Though Job says many things in this book of Job, yet he never says any thing about the escape of the Israelites from Egypt, or about Sinai and the Law, or about the Promised Land, so that we think he knew nothing about Moses or the things written in Exodus. He was probably not a Hebrew, but an Arabian.

What troubles had come on Job ? Find out from the first and second chapters.

Who came to comfort him ? Read chapter ii : 11-13.

When Job's friends came to comfort him, they fell into a long discussion—given in the chapters of Job—on the question, How a good and just God can afflict a just and righteous man ? Job was in great distress, and he could not see why God should let him live in such suffering. His friends answer him and he answers them back through a long debate about God's justice and man's misery. And after they have all finished, without deciding the question, God himself speaks to Job.

What question did Job and his friends discuss ?

Did they decide the question ?

'Then the Lord answered Job' : *when* ?

Is there any other account of God's speaking out of the whirlwind or in any similar way in the Scriptures ?

Read I. Kings xix : 11-13 ; Exodus xix : 16-19 ; Matthew iii : 16, 17 ; xvii : 5

What is meant by 'darkeneth counsel,' in the second verse?

Answer. Trying to throw light on the subject, but really making it darker.

What are 'words without knowledge'? *Answer.*

Ignorant words or mere *words* without any ideas in them.

Think of Job! What a wise man he was thought to be! How he had kept up the discussion with great wisdom in the eyes of men! Think, now, of God's saying to him, 'Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?' As if he had said in majestic tones: What ignorant talker is this, who confuses the mind and does not know what he says?

What is the figure used in the words 'Gird up now thy loins *like a man*'?

It means put on your greatest strength of mind. The robe was usually worn loose and flowing, but was girt up by a girdle when men ran or fought or wished to use their greatest strength.

'For I will demand of thee,' etc. : who before this had demanded knowledge and from whom? Read Job xiii : 3 ; xxiii : 3-5.

It is as if God had said: Since you think you can know the whole reasons for my government of mankind, I will ask you questions about smaller things of the earth itself—for the rest of the chapter is full of questions.

What is the first question which God asks Job?

Notice that all the questions from the fourth to the seventh verse are about the Creation. It is as if he said: If you presume to understand why suffering and evil are in the world which I have created, tell me what you know about the *creation* of the world.

When he says 'declare, if thou hast understanding,'

do you think he means to confound Job or to make him humble ?

Are there any '*foundations* of the earth' ?

What is the meaning of 'laid the measures'? *Answer.*
Measured and fixed its proportions as an architect does his building.

Explain 'stretched the line upon it.'

How does the first question of the sixth verse differ from that of the fourth verse ?

The question might be read, 'On what are the earth's foundations *settled*.'

Did the people in Job's time know that the earth was round ?

Why does this scripture—the very words of God himself—speak of the foundations of the earth, as if the earth was a plain built up from beneath ?

When God speaks to men, he speaks so that they will understand him with their present knowledge. The Bible speaks of the sun rising and setting, although the sun does not rise nor set, but the earth turns over. The Bible speaks of the stars in the firmament, as if they were lights fixed in a solid vault, although there is no vault there. And as men in those days believed the earth was flat and built up on deep foundations, God spoke so that they could understand him when he said to *them*, On what are the foundations settled ? It was the same as if he should *now* say to *us*, On what are the earth's foundation rocks inside the earth laid ? Tell, if thou knowest.

What important difference is there between a 'corner-stone' and 'foundations' ?

Does 'when the morning-stars sang together' mean the singing of angels, or the voice of the stars declaring God's glory as the heavens declare the glory of God ?

Who are meant by 'sons of God' ?

Why did they 'shout for joy' ?

What sublime beauty there is in this description of creation .

The earth is just made and all the worlds which we now see ; for in Genesis it says God made 'two great lights' and 'made the stars also.' Out of the night of chaos they have all just come ; the light of the first morning dawns on them ; all these morning-stars lift up their voice, declaring God's glory and praising his handiwork ; and all the angelic races who look on shout for joy at the sight.

God, out of the whirlwind, has spoken of Creation as a thing which man cannot understand. In the next four verses he speaks of the Sea, when it was first made, as a profound mystery which man cannot comprehend.

How was 'the sea shut up with doors' ? *Answer.* When it was first created, God made the rocks and the shores as walls and doors to shut it into its place.

How was it that the sea 'brake forth' at first ? Read Genesis i : 9, 10.

When God said, 'Let the waters be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear,' we can imagine that he lifted up parts of the earth in rocks and mountains and hills and high lands, and the seas 'brake forth' from the earth and mud, rushing into the great hollows.

What verse of Scripture represents the sea as shut up in a house ? Psalm xxxiii : 7.

God represents now these new waters gathered together for the first time, as a child born into the world. We speak of the earth and the sea now as *old*, but then they were *young*—very infants in the universe.

What name did God give to the infant waters at first ? See Genesis i : 10.

What 'garment' did God put around the infant waters ?

Vapors arose from the moist earth and from the waters. These mists lay upon and around the sea as a cloudy garment.

'And thick darkness a swaddling-band for it': was

the sea made before the light or not? See Genesis i : 9, 10, and 14, 15.

Darkness, thick darkness, inclosed the sea tightly in round the whole earth, as the bands of an infant's clothing inclose him.

What is meant in the tenth verse by 'my decreed place'?

What does 'brake up for it' mean?

'There is a cradle for this infant. Valleys were sunk for it in the earth capacious enough to receive it, and there it is laid to sleep.'

What are the 'bars and doors'? Read Jeremiah v : 22.

Explain 'Hitherto shalt thou come.'

Why are the waves called 'proud'?

The dashing billows of the ocean, roaring against the shore, seem to defy all power, as if they had proudly set their will to cover the very land.

'See with what ease the great God manages the raging sea. Notwithstanding the violence of its tides and the strength of its billows, he manages it as a nurse does a child.'

If man, then, cannot understand how the earth was created and how the sea was born and is taken care of like a child, can he understand how and why a good God permits evil and suffering in the world?

Twenty-fifth Sunday.

JOB.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

31. Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?

32. Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?

33. Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth?

34. Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee?

35. Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we *are*?

36. Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? or who hath given understanding to the heart?

37. Who can number the clouds in wisdom? or who can stay the bottles of heaven,

38. When the dust groweth into hardness, and the clods cleave fast together?

39. Wilt thou hunt the prey for the lion? or fill the appetite of the young lions,

40. When they couch in *their* dens, *and* abide in the covert to lie in wait?

41. Who provideth for the raven his food? when his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat.

We have not room in this book for this whole sublime address; but between the eleventh verse and the thirty-first God asks Job about Light and Death, and Rain and Snow, and if he understands how they are made and come.

And now from the thirty-first to the thirty-eighth verse he asks him about the Heavens, their constellations, and their laws. He turns Job's thoughts upward to the mysterious and boundless firmament, so wide and deep, as if he would overwhelm him with a sense of how very little man can know.

What is Ple-ia-des, (pronounced Plee'-yah-dees)? *Answer.* The cluster of seven stars to be seen in the heavens.

The Arabians called them 'The Heap of Stars' or 'The Knot of Stars.'

What is O-ri-on? *Answer.* The constellation of 'the Giant' in the sky.

The Orientals said that the giant was Nimrod, the mighty hunter, who was chained up to the sky for his wickedness.*

What is meant by the 'sweet influences of Ple-ia-des'?

* Let the teacher be sure to take his class, if it is the proper season of the year, on Sabbath evening, out under the heavens, and point out the constellations.

The Pleiades came above the horizon to the people in the East in the spring ; and all the sweet influences of grass and flowers after winter came then. The people spoke of the Pleiades in the spring as if they brought these sweet influences, just as we speak of the south wind bringing the flowers and the birds in the spring-time.

What does ‘Canst thou *bind* the sweet influences,’ etc., mean ? *Answer.* Canst thou hold the seven stars in their places, so that they appear in the spring ?

What are the ‘bands’ of Orion ? *Answer.* The three stars which form his belt in the sky, or the band by which he is fastened up to the sky.

What is meant by “*loose* the bands of Orion” ? *Answer.* Untie the starry Giant, so that he may move to some other place in the sky.

The ancients thought that the stars had something to do with hastening or hindering the plants and fruits.

Orion rose above the horizon in the autumn and winter season, and Pleiades in the spring. If you think of this, the verse may be read : ‘Canst thou bind the fruits which the constellation of the Seven Stars openeth, or open the fruits which the constellation of the Giant shuts up ?’

What is Maz'-zar-oth ? *Answer.* The twelve constellations which lie in the pathway of the sun—the Zodiac.

How is Mazzaroth brought forth in his season ? *Answer.* The twelve constellations rise and set one after another, just as the sun does. Each has its own place ; and God brings forth each one of the twelve in its season to its place in the sky.

What are Arc-tu-rus and his sons ? *Answer.* The Great Bear in the northern heavens, and the three stars in the tail.

What is an ‘ordinance’ ? *Answer.* A law which has been published.

What are ‘the ordinances of heaven’ ?
Explain ‘dominion thereof.’

How do the heavenly bodies rule the earth? Read Genesis i: 14-18.

Does 'Canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth' mean, 'Canst thou make these laws so as to rule over the earth,' or 'Canst thou take the laws of heaven and make them the laws of earth?'

Explain 'Lift up thy voice to the clouds.'

How small a being man is! He cannot even make the clouds hear his voice and answer him. But God speaks a word, and abundance of rain falls. What a beautiful description of the rain, 'abundance of waters *cover thee!*' The pouring shower, a mile long, a mile wide, half a mile high, *covers* man with its abundant waters.

Explain the figure of the lightnings saying unto thee, 'Here we are!'

What a magnificent image is this: You see a great king sitting; calling to him the thunder and lightning, sending them out to this and to that part of the sky, calling them again to come back, and the lightning, as if it were a swift-flying creature, returns in an instant to say, 'Here I am!' Can man do that?

What is meant by 'wisdom in the inward parts' and 'understanding in the heart'?

The meaning is, Who was it that put intelligence in the spirit of man, and understanding to perceive at all the nature of these things? The powers of reason and the wonderful performances of thought are more excellent than the stars of heaven, and shine brighter.

What are 'the bottles of heaven' in the next verse? *Answer.* The rain-filled clouds, which often look like the skin-bottles of the East.

What is 'stay the bottles of heaven'?

Read the thirty-seventh verse in this way after reading the thirty-sixth verse: 'And yet who in wisdom can number the clouds, or stay the bottles of heaven?' Think of the multi-

tudes of the clouds in all their shapes and sizes. Think of the dark clouds swollen with rain and ready to burst, like a bulging skin-bottle filled with water.

Does the thirty-sixth verse mean when the dust is baked into hardness and the dry clods cling fast by the heat, or when the dust and the clods are packed hard by the falling rain ?

In the last three verses of the chapter, God turns Job's mind to the curious Instincts of Animals. And if you will turn to the next chapter of Job, you will see that he goes on to speak of the curious habits of many animals, especially of the war-horse in his glory and strength.

Read the first question of the thirty-ninth verse, with the emphasis on *thou* : 'Wilt thou hunt the prey for the lion ?'

The lion could as soon provide man's food for man as the man could hunt the lion's prey for the lion.

Explain 'fill the appetite.'

Have *young* lions a hungrier appetite than *old* lions or not ?

When young lions are growing fast, like children that are growing fast, they have an enormous appetite, so that it is hard to *fill* it.

Who does the Scripture say gives the young lions their food ? Read Psalm civ : 21.

What do young lions couch in their dens for ? Read Psalm x : 9, 10.

What is a 'covert' ? *Answer.* A hiding-place in the thicket.

Explain 'abide in their covert to lie in wait.'

'Who provideth for the raven.' The raven is a kind of crow, a greedy and selfish bird, that will even eat the flesh of dead animals which clean birds will not touch ; and men do not like to do any thing for it.

How do the young ones cry unto God ?

How do they wander for lack of meat ? *Answer.*

Either the old birds do not take good care of them, or their appetite is so strong that they go half starved.

Prove that God hears the cry of the ravens. See Psalm cxlvii: 9; and Luke xii: 24.

How, then, does God answer this question of Job, whether a good and just God can afflict a good and just man?

How much patience and goodness has been taught to the world by the suffering of Job! And God saw that it would be so. Job could not understand it, for he did not know what were to be God's plans in the future. We do not know what God's plans are for the world or for the future. And when we are afflicted, we are to say that he who so wonderfully made creation, formed the sea, set up the stars in their constellations, gave man his mind and all the animals their curious instincts. He has good and wise reasons which I may not see for giving me my suffering.

Twenty-sixth Sunday.

REVIEW LESSON FOR THE SECOND QUARTER OF THE YEAR.

WHAT five psalms have we learned the past quarter?

THE FORTY-SECOND PSALM.

Does this psalm represent one who is near the tabernacle or away from it?

What is the figure used in the first part of the psalm to represent desire for worship?

What is the reason why the soul is cast down and disquieted?

What remedy is there for discouragement and despondency?

If we are kept from God's house by sickness or affliction, what can we still say?

What figure represents the depth of affliction?

How is God a rock in these waves and billows?

What is meant by having God for 'the *help* of my countenance,' and 'the *health* of my countenance'?

THE FORTY-SIXTH PSALM.

What is God represented to be in this psalm?

When has it been thought that this psalm was first written and sung?

How is the psalm divided into three parts?

By what figures of commotion and trouble does the first part show God to be a refuge?

By what peaceful figure and what strong figure does the second part illustrate the strength and help of God?

How does a victory illustrate, in the third part, the strength and help of God?

Show by what three like verses the leading ideas of the psalm are repeated.

THE FIFTY-FIRST PSALM.

Whose public confession is this psalm?

What three commandments had he broken?

What does he pray for in the first two verses?

What two reasons does he give in the next four verses why he should be forgiven?

How do the next three verses show that he may be forgiven?

What else does he pray for besides that his *past* sins may be forgiven—from the tenth to the twelfth verses?

What things does David say in the rest of the psalm that he expects to do after he is pardoned?

What is the one chief thing in David's thoughts throughout this psalm?

THE SIXTY-SEVENTH PSALM.

When is the psalm supposed to have been sung?

What blessing is repeated as a prayer?

Explain 'Saving health among all nations.'

Why is the fact that God is a righteous judge and governor of nations a glad and happy thing?

Repeat the verse which speaks of the gathered crops ?

What does 'bless us' mean ?

Show how the psalm might have been sung in responses ?

THE EIGHTY-FOURTH PSALM.

What are the two parts of this psalm ?

How are the tabernacles '*amiable*' ?

How had the sparrow and the swallow a house and nest at God's altar ?

Explain passing 'through the valley of Baca ; make it a well.'

Explain 'Go from strength to strength.'

Explain 'For a day spent in thy courts,' etc.

How is God a 'sun' and a 'shield' ?

When and how might this psalm have been sung ?

SOLOMON'S PRAYER.

Describe the occasion when this prayer was offered.

What had been done before the prayer was offered ?

What are the two parts of David's promise to which Solomon refers ?

What shows God's condescension in dwelling in the temple ?

Explain the part about a man trespassing against his neighbor.

What does he pray for 'when the people are smitten before the enemy' ?

What three things does he pray for when heaven is 'shut up' ?

What does he suppose may be in the land besides 'famine' and 'pestilence' ?

What reason does Solomon urge why God should then 'forgive and do and give' ?

GOD'S ADDRESS OUT OF THE WHIRLWIND.

What question had Job and his friends been discussing ?

Had God at any other time spoken out of the whirlwind?

Explain 'Darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge.'

What was the first subject about which God asked Job questions?

What was the second subject about which he asked questions?

What two other subjects in the last part of the chapter?

Did God mean to show Job his ignorance or to make him feel his presumption in trying to reason about these things, or to show him that it is impossible to understand the question he had been discussing?

What, then, are you to say in answer to the question, How a good God permits suffering and evil in the world?

Twenty-seventh Sunday.

THE NINETIETH PSALM.

A Prayer of Moses, the man of God.

1. LORD, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations.
2. Before the mountains were brought forth, or e'er thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou *art* God.
3. Thou turnest man to destruction ; and sayest, Return, ye children of men.
4. For a thousand years in thy sight *are but* as yesterday when it is past, and *as a watch in the night.*
5. Thou carriest them away as with a flood ; they are *as a sleep* : in the morning *they are* like grass *which groweth up.*
6. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up ; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.
7. For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled.
8. Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret *sins* in the light of thy countenance.

9. For all our days are passed away in thy wrath : we spend our years as a tale *that is told*.

Some persons have thought that Moses did not write this psalm, because the psalm says in the tenth verse that life is only seventy years long, and Moses lived one hundred and twenty years. But, if the *people* at that time lived only seventy or eighty years, a lifetime only seventy years long would be all the more impressive to Moses from *his* living one hundred and twenty years.

It is supposed, too, that the length of life was shortened during the stay in the wilderness, and that this is the reason why Moses speaks of the shortness of life in this psalm.

It is the oldest psalm in the book of Psalms. Besides the title, other reasons why it is thought Moses wrote it are, that it is different from all other psalms, that it is full of grand thoughts like the grand events of Moses's life, and like the grand thoughts of the songs of Moses in Exodus and Deuteronomy, and that no other man that ever lived, that we know of, is so well suited to be the author ; and that it cannot be proved that any other man *was* the author.

What reason is there why some persons think that Moses did not write this psalm ?

What reasons, besides the title, are there for thinking that Moses *did* write it ?

Repeat the first verse.

When the word **LORD** in our Bible is printed in capital letters as it is here, **LORD**, it is in the Hebrew the word **JEHOV**. The verse, then, is the same as if it were written, 'Jehovah, thou hast been our dwelling-place' ; and as Jehovah is God's name for his Eternal *Existence*, it is sublimely suited to this psalm, which describes his eternal being.

Why is the name Jehovah well suited to this psalm ?

How is God 'our dwelling-place' ?

Who are meant by 'our' ?

Explain 'our dwelling-place *in all generations*.'

A dwelling-place, or a dwelling, is a place in which we live in peace and comfort, and are protected from cold and storm and attack. God is the person who gives peace and comfort, and who protects his people from all harm. A house, after a few years, decays and falls to pieces. Very few houses last more than two or three generations. But God is comfort, peace, and protection through *all* generations.

How does Moses show in the second verse the changelessness of God?

Mountains, as they stand lifting their high summits into the sky, represent the things that last longest on earth.

When were the 'mountains' 'brought forth'?

Before these great monsters of land first raised their heads out of the seas by which they were covered, Jehovah lived. Moses was thinking, no doubt, of the creation of the world when he wrote this verse.

What was Moses thinking of when he wrote 'ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world'?

Can you explain the meaning of 'from everlasting to everlasting'?

Read it with the emphasis on the words *from* and *to*. *From* everlasting duration in the past *to* everlasting duration in the future, thou art God.

What is meant by 'turnest man to destruction'?

Man was made of dust, and turns back to dust again. As long as he is strong and well, he goes on in life; but when sickness or old age comes on him, God turns him back toward dust again. Read Genesis iii : 19, and Psalm civ : 29.

How does God say, and when does he say, 'Return, ye children of men'?

How does Moses show God's everlasting life in the fourth verse?

'A thousand years are but as yesterday.' As a man in

whose sight a thousand dollars are but as a penny must be wonderfully rich, so a God in whose sight a thousand years are but as a day must be wonderfully enduring.

Which seems the longer, yesterday when it is past, or to-day when it is present ?

What is meant by 'a watch in the night' ? *Answer.*
The hours when a watchman is watching in the night.

In the land of Moses and of David the night was divided into three or four watches. In God's sight a thousand years is as quickly gone as a third or a fourth part of the night when you are sleeping.

'Thou carriest them away' : carriest *what* away ?

The thousand years are carried away as if God's eternal being, like a rushing torrent or freshet of water, swept them away. The whole human family is driven away as when a sweeping flood of rain carries every thing before it.

'They are as a sleep' : what is meant by 'they' ?

How are a thousand years like a sleep ?

Sleep is one of the quickest things to the one who sleeps. A moment ago he went to sleep, and now he is awake, but hours are gone. So a thousand years to God pass by in an instant. Read II. Peter iii : 8.

What three things are the thousand years likened to in this verse ?

How does grass represent the shortness of life ?

'It is like the grass in the east, which, after a fruitful shower, grows up high, as if by a magic spell, but, when the scorching east wind passes over it, completely withers in two days, and is cut down and is used for fuel.' Read James i : 11.

'For *we* are consumed' : who is meant by '*we*' ?

What does 'consumed' mean ?

How does he mean that God's anger consumes us ?

When we die so soon, cut down like the grass, it is because

we are withered or consumed by the wrath of God, that is, by death, which is the punishment of God's wrath.

Which is the more sad, the *fact* that life is so short, or the *cause* why it is so short?

Notice that in the seventh verse Moses gives the *cause* of the shortness of life, because God's wrath cuts it short; and that in the eighth verse he gives the *cause* of *God's wrath*, because he sees our sins.

What is 'set our iniquities before thee'?

It is as if God took up our sins one by one and set all the multitude of them down before him.

What is meant by 'our secret sins in the light of thy countenance'? Read I. Corinthians iv : 5.

It is as if the very sins which we thought secret he took up and set them just before his face, where the light shining from his face showed all their horrid forms. And then God's face is angry, and he consumes us by death in a moment.

How do all our days pass away in God's wrath or under God's wrath?

Perhaps Moses was thinking of that whole generation of people who were condemned to die in the wilderness.

How are our years spent 'like a tale that is told'?

Twenty-eighth Sunday.

THE NINETIETH PSALM.

10. The days of our years *are* threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength *they be* fourscore years, yet *is* their strength labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

11. Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.

12. So teach *us* to number our days, that we may apply *our* hearts unto wisdom.

13. Return, O LORD, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants.

14. O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

15. Make us glad according to the days *wherein* thou hast afflicted us and the years *wherein* we have seen evil.

16. Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children.

17. And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.

How are 'the days of our years' only threescore and ten?

Does Moses say that they are never more than seventy?

If they go on to fourscore, what is the reason?

How is their strength labor and sorrow?

The *days* of our life, if you reckon them one by one, seem many, but yet all of them together are but about seventy years, or, if one has a very *strong* constitution, about eighty years; and even then his strength only brings the care and trouble and sorrow and fears which belong to old age.

'For *it* is soon cut off': what is soon cut off?

The whole generation of the people who came from Egypt with Moses were condemned to die in the wilderness. And perhaps Moses had them in mind when he spoke of the shortness of life. It is supposed that human life, which had been much longer before that time, was then shortened down to about seventy years.

How old was Moses himself? Read Deuteronomy xxxiv: 7.

How old did Joshua live to be? Read Joshua xxiv: 29.

'Who knoweth the power of thine anger': does this mean who ever knows how great and terrible God's anger is, or who really feels the greatness of God's anger?

We must remember that death is the way in which God's

anger is inflicted upon us, and Moses means who really feels the fact of death, or God's anger shown in death, as he ought to feel it.

What words of the verse are not in the Hebrew?

If you leave out the words 'so is,' and put a comma instead of an interrogation mark after 'anger,' then the sentence will read, 'Who knoweth the power of thine anger, even according to thy fear, thy wrath?' that is, Who knoweth the power of thine anger, and who knoweth, according to a proper fear of thee, thy wrath?

What kind of fear is meant by 'thy fear'?

What is meant by 'number our days'?

What is it to 'apply our hearts unto wisdom'?

Does 'Return, O Lord' mean Turn back *to* us, as if God had been absent, or, Turn back thy punishments from us, that is, Turn back the power of thy wrath to thyself?

Does 'How long' mean How long wilt thou be absent, or, How long will thy wrath continue?

Whom did Moses mean by 'thy servants'?

'And let it repent thee': does God ever repent?

Read Exodus xxxii: 12, 14, and Deuteronomy xxxii: 36.

God is often spoken of in the Scriptures as if he were a man, as having a face and hands and feet and eyes, speaking, acting, waking, etc. But no one, of course, thinks for a moment that God, a spirit, has any body like a man's. When we say that God changes his face from a smile to a frown toward us, we mean that he passes through the same change of feeling as a man does when his face changes from a smile to a frown. And when we say that God repents, we mean that he *acts as if* he had thought differently of what he was going to do, and had become sorry that he had made a mistake. Of course God cannot mistake, for he knows every thing when he begins which he does when he ends.

What is 'mercy'?

Can we be satisfied with mercy when we know God's wrath is on us ?

What is meant by 'satisfy us early' ?

If we have this mercy, how long will the joy and gladness continue ?

Prove that God likes to give joy and gladness to his creatures.

Is it right for them to go sad and mourning all their days ?

Does the fifteenth verse mean make our gladness as high as our sorrow was deep, or, make our gladness as long in the future as our affliction was long in the past ?

How does 'years wherein we have seen evil' differ from 'days wherein thou hast afflicted us' ?

What two things, in verse sixteen, does he ask may appear ?

To what two classes of persons does he wish them to appear ?

Thy *work* means thy *doing* : let us see in whatever is done to us in life that it is thy work, so that we shall be satisfied with it.

Thy *glory* means the excellence or honorableness or majesty of thy character and work, so that it lifts up the mind to great and high thoughts of thee.

What is meant by 'the *beauty* of God' ?

Beauty means at first what is fair in appearance, like a handsome face or like a splendid flower. Then any graceful act, done with graceful gesture and pleasant manner, is beautiful. Then any person whose life is such that we admire him is beautiful to us. Then the whole character of a person who always does what is good and noble is beautiful. The beauty of God is the admirable gracefulness of his whole noble and loving and pure life.

How can this beauty be *upon us* ?

Explain 'establish thou the works of our hands upon us.'

Why is the sentence repeated ?

Read the last half of the verse in this way : ‘and establish thou the *work of our* hands upon us ; yea, the work of your hands establish *Thou it.*’

Now, tell me to what God’s life is compared at the beginning of the psalm.

What is the *cause* why man’s life is cut short ?

In what way is God’s anger seen when it is cut off ?

How then can we be glad and joyful all our life ?

How can we have the *beauty* of God upon *us* ?

Twenty-ninth Sunday.

THE NINETY-FIRST PSALM.

1. HE that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

2. I will say of the LORD, *He is* my refuge and my fortress : my God ; in him will I trust.

3. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, *and* from the noisome pestilence.

4. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust : his truth *shall be thy* shield and buckler.

5. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night ; *nor* for the arrow *that* fieth by day ;

6. *Nor* for the pestilence *that* walketh in darkness ; *nor* for the destruction *that* wasteth at noonday.

7. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand ; *but* it shall not come nigh thee.

8. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.

THERE is no title to this psalm ; and we do not know who wrote it. It has the same grand tone which the Ninetieth Psalm has, and it has the same grand subject of ‘God our Dwelling-place.’ Perhaps it was written by Moses ; perhaps by some one who admired that psalm of Moses, and wrote this in imitation of it.

Is the thought of the first verse of this psalm really different from the thought of the first verse of the last psalm ?

What is the 'secret place of the Most High'? Read Psalms xxvii : 5, and xxxi : 20.

Why is God called 'the Most High'?

Explain 'under the shadow of the Almighty.'

God is like a Most High Mountain. When under the shadow of it, you feel safe from storms; no wind can blow it over, and no tempest can beat it down. Whoever makes God his dwelling-place will find him like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, giving cool shade and rest when all around the hot sun beats down on the scorching sand.

Explain the difference between the four different names of God in the first two verses.

Read the second verse, leaving out the italic words.

Does 'I *will* say' mean what the psalmist will say at some *future* time, or what he will continue to say *always*?

What other names besides these does *David* call God? Read Psalm xviii : 1, 2.

Can any one who is not a child of God love to say, *My God*; *my refuge*; *my fortress*?

When will a person, instead of saying, '*the* Saviour,' and '*our* Saviour,' begin to say, '*my* Saviour'?

Does 'in him will I trust' mean that he will trust in the Lord as a refuge from danger and a fortress against assault, or that he will trust in him, as God, a friend and helper?

A refuge is a place into which we may run from danger; a fortress is a place from which you may fight off attacks. You can trust a good refuge to receive you when you run from danger; you can trust a good fortress to protect you when assailed; but God is more than such a refuge and fortune—he is a *friend* whose love you can enjoy, and whose promise to make you better and happier you can trust.

Can one who is guilty trust in God as a friend, without first trusting in him as a refuge and a fortress?

How is God like the ancient city of refuge ?

How will God deliver any one 'from the snare of the fowler'? Read Psalm cxxiv : 6, 7.

Who is meant by 'the fowler'?

What is meant by '*snare* of the fowler'?

A snare or trap for birds is a cunning, strong box or net, or thing which the bird's enemy takes to get the bird ; and therefore the snare of the fowler here represents the cunning and power of the soul's enemy.

Who is the enemy who has the strongest and most cunning snare? Read II. Timothy ii : 26.

What is a 'noisome pestilence'?

Does 'noisome pestilence' represent an enemy of the soul, or not?

To what is God likened in the first part of the fourth verse? Read Ruth ii : 12 ; Deuteronomy xxxii : 11, 12 ; and Matthew xxiii : 37.

The simple safety and trust of the soul in God is beautifully likened to the little bird which runs under the wings of the mother-bird, and there, warm and safe with her protector over her, feels entirely free from harm. What could be more beautiful as an image of the soul trusting in God's tender and gentle care!

Does 'his truth' mean the truthfulness of what God has said to us, or the doctrines of his word which, together, are called his truth?

What is the difference between a 'shield' and a 'buckler'?

How is God's truth like a shield and buckler? Read Ephesians vi : 14-16.

Notice, now, that in the fifth and sixth verses three kinds of things are mentioned of which men are afraid—fear in the night; what enemies do by day; what sickness does by night and by day. He who *fully* trusts in God will have little fear of either of these things.

What is meant by 'terror by night'? See Song of Solomon iii : 7, 8; Proverbs iii : 24.

The reason why he makes mention of fear in the night-time is because darkness makes men fearful. If any thing do but creak, our imagination magnifies our fears. If we have a calm trust in God, we are not afraid of horrid imaginations, of monsters, or of spirits, nor of enemies or robbers. Read how God promises to protect his own in Isaiah xlivi : 2.

What is meant by 'the arrow that flieth by day'?

The arrow in those days was the chief weapon, as the pistol or gun is now. No enemy in the night-time, no enemy's weapon in the day-time, can harm the one that trusts in God.

How does a pestilence '*walk* in darkness'?

A great and terrible disease, like the cholera or the plague, is always more terrible when it comes in the night. And when it is in the land, it seems as if it walked from street to street and from city to city in a single night.

How is the destruction that wasteth at noonday different from the pestilence that walketh in darkness?

Explain 'a thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand.'

What does 'it shall not come nigh thee' mean?

Does this mean that, when such a pestilence as the cholera is in the land, thousands and ten thousands falling, the cholera will not come nigh one who trusts in God?

Can any such thing reach the real life of a trusting Christian?

Does such a thing reach the real life of one not a Christian?

Even if a good man should *die*, would the pestilence come *nigh* to him?

What shall he see with his eyes?

Does the verse mean that, when the good man sees

one thousand and ten thousand falling, this fall is the reward of the wicked ?

The good, whose souls are saved, behold and see the reward of the wicked. And the good, who live honest and upright, live to behold and see, in the course of years, the downfall of the dishonest and vicious.

Thirty Sunday.

THE NINETY-FIRST PSALM.

9. Because thou hast made the **LORD**, *which is* my refuge, *even* the Most High, thy habitation;

10. There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

11. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee *in* all thy ways.

12. They shall bear thee up in *their* hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

13. Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.

14. Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.

15. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I *will be* with him in trouble: I will deliver him, and honor him.

16. With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation.

The psalmist has already said that God is his refuge, and now he wishes to have others make him their refuge, too. When he says, 'Because thou hast made the Lord,' etc., it is as if he said, 'If *thou* wilt make the Lord, who is *my* refuge, *thy* habitation, there shall no evil befall thee.'

What is there, in the first verse of the psalm, like habitation?

Verse ten says, 'No evil shall befall thee': does it mean that there never will be any harm to a Christian?

What does 'befall' mean?

What is a 'plague'? Read Exodus xi: 1, and Numbers xvi: 48, 49.

Did the plagues of Egypt come nigh the dwellings of the children of Israel? Read Exodus ix : 6, 25, 26; xii : 23; x : 22, 23.

What reason is given, in the eleventh verse, why the plague will not come nigh thy dwelling?

Do you know from any other part of Scripture that angels take care of men? Read Genesis xix : 1; John v : 4; Acts x : 7; xii : 8-10.

Does the verse say they will take care of the whole or a part of his life?

‘All thy ways : no single way of all is not watched over.

How does verse twelve say that angels will keep them?

‘Lest thou dash thy foot against a stone’: does this mean something against which the body or the soul stumbles?

Who once quoted these eleventh and twelfth verses to our Saviour? Read Matthew iv : 6.

For what purpose did he quote them?

See how tender God is in his speech to us. If the greatness of his majesty overawe us, he likens himself to a hen who takes her chickens under her wings. If we are alarmed by fears and foes by day and night, he shows how powerful he is to keep them from us. If we think of our loneliness in this world, he shows that, if we are his, a multitude of angels care for us.

Notice, now, that stones and pestilence and plague have been the troubles before, to show the things opposed to the believer. But now lions, serpents, and dragons come out to meet him, showing the great and dreadful horrors by which Satan will try to scare him from his trust in God.

How many kinds of beasts are mentioned in this thirteenth verse?

The lion is bold and open: the adder or asp is secret and hidden. So Satan has his open and secret terrors: his stout and roaring enemies against a soul, and his silent and unsuspected temptations which bite and poison us.

Which is more to be feared, the lion or the young lion ?

Which is the worst of all four ?

What shows the completeness of the victory over these foes promised in this verse ?

Read how the Israelites overcame their enemies in Deuteronomy viii : 15 ; how Samson overcame in Judges xiv : 5, 6 ; how David did in I. Samuel xvii : 34, 35 ; and how Daniel did in Daniel vi : 23.

How did our Saviour promise the same thing to his disciples which this psalm promises ? Read Luke x : 19.

Who is 'I,' in the fourteenth verse ?

Do you think 'set his love upon me' any stronger expression than 'loves me' ?

Will God deliver any one who does not love him ?

Will he deliver every one who does love him from every danger and trouble ?

What is meant by 'set him on high' ?

For what reason does the verse say that God will set him on high ?

What is it to 'know his name' ?

How will God treat his call ?

Will he answer the call of all persons ?

In what four ways does this verse say that God will show that he loves him ?

In what other way does the sixteenth verse say that God will do him good ?

Does every child of God have long life ?

What does 'show him my salvation' ?

To have God show us his salvation, that is, to take us and keep us as his own saved children, is to give us the best refuge of all. Then we abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

What is the general subject of this psalm ?

In what respect is it like the Ninetieth Psalm ?
 To what is God likened in the first two verses ?
 From what six things does God promise to protect in
 the next four verses ? Protect whom ?

Do the things, from the third to the thirteenth verse,
 represent spiritual enemies or not ? See Psalm lvii : 4.

What is the *reason* why he will deliver him ?

Does the psalm mean that God will give long life and
 salvation to any one who calls upon him ?

Thirty-first Sunday.

THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRD PSALM.

A Psalm of David.

1. BLESS the LORD, O my soul : and all that is within me, *bless* his holy name.
2. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits :
3. Who forgiveth all thine iniquities ; who healeth all thy diseases ;
4. Who redeemeth thy life from destruction ; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies ;
5. Who satisfieth thy mouth with good *things* ; *so that* thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.
6. The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all *that are* oppressed.
7. He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.
8. The LORD *is* merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.
9. He will not always chide ; neither will he keep *his anger* forever.
10. He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

Whose psalm is this ?

David's tender heart is filled with thoughts of God's kindness to himself and to others, and he pours them out in this psalm in a flood of warm and thankful praise.

Notice that he praises God for four kinds of things : First,

in the first five verses, praise for what God had done for himself; secondly, in the next five verses, praise for what he does for his fellow-men; thirdly, in the next eight verses, praise for the tenderness of his pity; fourthly, in the last four verses, praise that God is King over the whole heavens and earth.

Describe the four parts of the psalm.

What is the meaning of the word 'bless'?

To bless is to call blessings or good gifts upon a person. When we bless men, we wish that good things may come upon them. When we bless God, we wish that all good things may be his. But since they are already his, we say that we are glad that all good things *are* his; or we say that he is so good that he deserves to have all good things; or we wish all men to know that God is so good and full of blessing. So that when we say, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul,' we mean, Praise, O my soul, the praiseworthy goodness of God.

In the first part of the psalm, how many things does David bless God for?

'And all that is within me': what is there 'within me' besides 'my soul,' with which I am commanded to love God? See Deuteronomy vi: 6.

What is meant by 'bless his holy name'?

When your heart is overwhelmed by kind and loving deeds, you find your thoughts rising up to call blessings and honor on the *name* of the person who does the deeds.

What makes his name a holy name?

See how David fondly calls over the name and the blessing again in the second verse, as he does several more times in the last part of the psalm.

What are 'benefits'?

Name some of the benefits which God gave to the children of Israel. Read Psalms cvi: 9-11; cv: 43, 44.

Do you think these are the kind of 'benefits' which David means?

What is the first of the benefits mentioned in the third verse ?

Whose iniquities are ‘thine iniquities’ ?

Is it possible for a person to know that he is forgiven without praising God for it ?

Does ‘thy diseases’ mean diseases of the body or of the soul ?

David does not begin, like others, by numbering temporal blessings, such as health, home, friends, and the like, but first of all he thanks God for the *forgiveness of his sins*.

‘Redeemeth thy life’: is thy life the life of the body or of the soul ?

What is the end of the diseases of the soul ?

‘From destruction’: can the soul be destroyed ? Read Matthew x : 28.

What is the difference between loving-kindness and tender mercy ?

Does ‘crowneth thee’ mean that the soul is crowned with loving-kindness and tender mercies, as the head is crowned with a garland, or that loving-kindness and tender mercies are a crown to iniquities forgiven, diseases healed, and life redeemed ?

A crown is both an ornament and an honor ; and God, by loving-kindness and tender mercies, adorns and honors us. And as he who *gives* a crown is more honored than he who takes it, so God is most honored when he crowns our souls with loving-kindness and tender mercies.

Does ‘thy mouth,’ in the fifth verse, mean the mouth of the body or of the soul ? Read Psalm cvii : 9, and Isaiah lviii : 11.

What is the meaning of ‘thy youth is renewed’ ?

It is as if the verse reads, ‘So completely does his bounty feed the soul, that even in old age thou growest young again and soarest like an eagle.’

‘Thy youth is renewed like an eagle’s’: is the eagle’s youth ever renewed ?

There is an old fable that the eagle in his old age mounts up to the sun and then plunges into the ocean and becomes young again, but we do not suppose that David alluded to this. We say of an old man who is still strong and active, that he has renewed his youth. The eagle is a long-lived bird, which keeps its strength to the last. So the soul, which is kept by God, keeps its life and strength.

‘When eagles are nearly a hundred years old, they cast their feathers and become bald like young ones, and then new feathers sprout forth.’

What is the second part of the psalm about ?

What does the Lord do for the oppressed ?

What is the difference between ‘righteousness’ and ‘judgment’ ?

What is it to ‘execute righteousness and judgment’ ?

How noble is this saying in the mouth of King David, who thinks God a greater king than himself, and that the poor are more sure of God’s protection than of the protection of any earthly monarch.

Many of the oppressed are under tyranny or slavery all their days : how, then, does God execute righteousness and judgment for *all* the oppressed ?

Explain how the Lord made known his ways unto Moses.

What acts did he show unto the children of Israel ?

Do you think David had in mind, when he wrote the eighth verse, what God said to Moses on the mount—in Exodus xxxiv : 6 ?

Show the difference between ‘merciful’ and ‘gracious.’

Show the difference between ‘*slow* to anger’ and ‘plenteous in mercy.’

David says, in the sixth, seventh, and eighth verses, ‘Not only is God good to me, but to all his people in distress : not only did he prove this to Moses and to Israel by saving them

from Pharaoh and the other nations, but by bearing with their own offences.'

Does 'chide' mean chide his children or chide his enemies ?

Does 'keep his anger' mean keep angry or keep *from* being angry ?

How do you explain 'dealt with us after our sins' ?

How would it be if he *should* deal with us after our sins ?

What is the reward of iniquities ? Read Romans vi : 23 ; Matthew xxv : 41-46.

Thirty-second Sunday.

THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRD PSALM.

11. For as the heaven is high above the earth, *so* great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

12. As far as the east is from the west, *so* far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

13. Like as a father pitith *his* children, *so* the LORD pitith them that fear him.

14. For he knoweth our frame ; he remembereth that we *are* dust.

15. *As for* man, his days *are* as grass ; as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.

16. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone ; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

17. But the mercy of the LORD *is* from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children ;

18. To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.

19. The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens ; and his kingdom ruleth over all.

20. Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.

21. Bless ye the LORD, all *ye* his hosts ; *ye* ministers of his, that do his pleasure.

22. Bless the LORD, all his works, in all places of his dominion : bless the LORD, O my soul.

What is the third part of the psalm about ?

What is David's description of God's mercy to us in the eleventh verse ?

We cannot think of a greater height in this world than the height from heaven to earth, and so God's mercy is the very greatest that we can possibly think of. Read Isaiah iv : 7-9.

'Toward' whom is such mercy as this shown ?

How does David describe the removal of transgressions ?

How does this verse show that our sins shall be *entirely* removed from us if God forgives us ?

'The psalmist uses the longest measure which the world can afford—the distance of the east from the west—to express a thing which can scarcely be expressed in any other way.' Read Psalm xxxvi : 5.

Hath he removed *your* transgressions from you as far as the east is from the west ?

What is it that David describes in verse thirteen ?

See what three beautiful descriptions of God ! When we lift up our eyes and behold the lofty and stupendous vault of heaven, encircling, protecting, enlightening, and cherishing the earth, we can see, as in a glass, the immeasurable height, the boundless extent, the healthful influence of God's mercy, which embraces all his creatures. So often as we see the sun arising in the east and darkness fleeing away from him to the west, we may see an image of that goodness of God which is ready to remove our sins out of his sight. And that our hearts may at all times have confidence toward God, he is represented as having toward us the fond and tender affection of a father, ready to defend us, nourish us, provide for us, bear with us, forgive us, and take us in his arms of everlasting love.

How does a father show his pity for his children ?

Whom is it that the Lord pities ?

What reason does the fourteenth verse give for his pitying them ?

What does 'our frame' mean ?

How are we 'dust'? Read Genesis ii : 7 and iii : 19.

How does knowing our frame and remembering that we are dust lead God to pity us?

How are man's days like grass?

What is there in the wind, in that country, to make the grass wither? Read Genesis xli : 6 and 23, and Jonah iv : 8.

Explain 'it is gone.'

'As the hot, burning east wind destroys the grass and flowers after their short life, so the wind of suffering, trouble, and sickness destroys the spiritual flower, man.'

Explain 'the place of it shall know it no more.'

The flower of the field, scorched by the hot wind, dies, and others grow in its stead, and every body forgets that it was there.

How is his mercy *from* everlasting *to* everlasting ?
Mercy to whom ?

What is meant here by 'his righteousness' ?

Does this verse mean that, if God has mercy upon a person, he will certainly have mercy 'on his children and children's children' ?

Have we any right to expect God to forgive us because he forgave our parents or grandparents ?

But, if we sincerely try to serve God, *ought* we not, then, to expect God's mercy and favor, *because* he showed them to our parents and ancestors ?

To what kind of people does verse eighteen say that God shows his righteousness and to their children's children ?

What 'covenant' is meant ?

What 'commandments' are meant ?

'Those that *remember*' the commandments, or remember what ?

What is the fourth part of the psalm about ?

See now how David mounts up above the world, borne aloft by the great thoughts of God which have filled his soul. He

seems to see God's throne, as if himself in the very heavens ; and he calls on all angels above, and all stars and servants of God, and all his works to praise him.

Does 'hath prepared his throne in the heavens' mean that there was ever a time when it was not prepared ?

What descriptions can you find of the glory of his throne, the brightness of his majesty, and the might of his power ? See Revelation iv : 1-5 ; v : 11-13.

'Kingdom ruleth over *all*' : all *what* ?

How many kinds of persons and things does David call to praise God in the rest of the psalm ?

Whom do the angels 'excel in strength' ?

Explain 'hearkening' and 'word' in 'hearkening unto the voice of his word.'

Does 'all ye his hosts' mean hosts of stars, or hosts of angels, or hosts of the redeemed, or all these different hosts ?

How are the stars or angels God's ministers ? Read Hebrews i : 14, and Job xxxviii : 35.

Does the doing of God's pleasure mean that it is *pleasant* to them to do it ?

Think of the height of David's thought, as it soars among the stars and angels, calling on them to praise God. Think of the myriads of suns and stars and angels in that happy world of life, moving in the circles and going on their errands, full of happy work.

'All his works' : do not the twentieth and twenty-first verses include all that the twenty-second does ?

It is as if David's soul, swelling with thoughts of God's greatness and goodness, would leave nothing out, and so he calls on every thing in every part of God's kingdom to praise their Ruler on his throne in the heavens. It is as if David would have all creation at once, in their voices and glory, sing one anthem of praise.

What is God's *dominion* ?

Name as many kinds of God's works, in all the places

of his dominion, as you can, and show how they praise him. Read Psalm xix : 1, 2.

What is the last thing which David calls on to bless God?

Think how his heart must have swelled as he went on from the beginning, until at the end he was too full of sublime admiration to do more than call on all things to bless God, and to call on his soul to unite with all the works of all his dominion in praising the goodness of God.

Thirty-third Sunday.

THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SEVENTH PSALM.

1. By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.
2. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.
3. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song ; and they that wasted us *required of us* mirth, *saying*, Sing us *one* of the songs of Zion.
4. How shall we sing the **LORD**'s song in a strange land ?
5. If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget *her cunnirg*.
6. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth ; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.
7. Remember, O **LORD**, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem ; who said, Rase *it*, rase *it*, *even* to the foundation thereof.
8. O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed ; happy shall *he be*, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us.
9. Happy shall *he be*, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.

In this psalm we are taken at once to Babylon, and see the Hebrew prisoners sitting under the willows on the river bank. Their heads are bowed, their hearts full of sorrow, their eyes full of tears, as they think of Jerusalem and Zion, from which they have been torn away.

Did David write this psalm ?

How long after David's time were the people carried off to Babylon ?

Who were carried away captive ? Read II. Kings xxiv : 10, 14.

Take notice that there are three parts of the psalm, each part three verses long. The first part shows the sorrow of the captives at Babylon ; the second part shows the captives longing for Jerusalem and Zion ; the third part shows the captives returned and praying for the destruction of their enemies.

FIRST PART.—What rivers were the rivers of Babylon ?

Notice the force of the word '*there*.' By the rivers of Babylon—yes, *there* in that desolate place—we sat down, desolate and alone.

Was, or was not, the country of Babylon beautiful ?

Read Isaiah xxxvi : 17, and II. Kings xviii : 32.

What was the cause of their weeping ?

Do you think the captives really carried harps to Babylon, or is this only a figure of speech, showing their sorrow ?

Is a harp a musical instrument for times of joy or for times of sorrow ? Read Genesis xxxi : 27 ; Job xxx : 31.

What does the hanging of the harp on the tree signify ?

'In the midst *thereof*': of the city or of the empire ?

Who were 'they that carried away' the Hebrews captive ? See Ezra ii : 1.

Give the meaning of 'they that wasted us.'

How did they wish the Hebrews to show their mirth ?

Think what a depth of bitterness was in the heart of these captives when, besides the burning of their temple, the enemy in their own land and their own captivity, their captors asked them to sing one of the temple-songs in that land of idolatry and of exile. See Proverbs xxv : 20.

SECOND PART.—Are the next three verses spoken to those who captured them, or not?

Is verse four a question, or merely an exclamation?

‘If I forget thee, O Jerusalem’: would singing the songs of Zion in Babylon be forgetfulness of Jerusalem?

Explain ‘let my right hand forget her cunning.’

What is meant by ‘let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth’?

The right hand was used to play the harp, and the tongue to sing the song. And the meaning is: ‘If I play for mere sport, forgetful of the sacredness of God’s city and God’s house, may the hand with which I play lose its skill to play, and my tongue with which I sing cling to the roof of my mouth.’

How could he *prefer* Jerusalem *above* his *chief* joy?

THIRD PART.—What is the subject of the last part of the psalm?

‘Remember,’ etc.: does he pray God to remember the children of Edom to bless them, or to curse them?

What prophets prophesied against Edom? Read Jeremiah xlix: 17, 18; Ezekiel xxv: 12–14.

The whole of the short prophecy of Obadiah is ‘concerning Edom.’ Read the first and fourth verses and from the tenth to the fifteenth verse. And remembering that Mount Seir was the region where the children of Esau or Edom lived, read, too, Ezekiel xxxv: 1–9. You will see what God directed the prophets to say against Edom. Read, too, the *reason* for punishing Edom in Ezekiel xxv: 12–14.

Does ‘the day of Jerusalem’ mean the day of Jerusalem’s destruction by Nebuchadnezzar, or the day when Jerusalem was rebuilt by Nehemiah, or the day of its future prosperity?

Give the meaning of ‘Rase it, rase it, even to the foundations thereof.’

Who was it that said, ‘Rase it, rase it’?

If you will read Ezekiel xxxv : 10, you will see what the Edomites said against the two nations of Israel and Samaria. And in the twelfth verse you will see how the Edomites 'blasphemed' against Israel and Israel's God.

Who was 'the daughter of Babylon'?

A city was often described in poetry in those times as a daughter or young woman—as among us, one might say in high, poetic language, 'O daughter of Washington, who dost sit at the head of the nation.' The daughter of Tyre is the city of Tyre; daughter of Sidon is city of Sidon. 'O virgin daughter of Babylon,' and 'daughter of the Chaldeans,' and 'lady of the kingdoms,' is the city of Babylon.

'Who art to be destroyed': who prophesied before this time against Babylon? Read Isaiah xlvii : 5, 7, 11; Jeremiah li : 1-3, 6-11, 24.

Read the rest of the verse with careful emphasis: 'Happy shall *he* be that rewardeth *thee* as *thou* hast served *us*.'

It is as if he said, 'Babylon ought to be destroyed, and happy is the man who shall do it.' Read Obadiah 15.

How can you make the wish that Babylon may be served, as Babylon has served us, agree with Matthew v : 43, 44?

We have no right to return evil for good; but God may say to us that a certain person or city or country is full of wickedness, and is to be destroyed, and bid us be glad over its destruction.

Would this wish be in accordance with prophecy, or not?

Is it right, or not, to wish that Satan may be punished?

What still more fearful wish is there in the last verse?

Was it customary in war to kill little children in this way? See Nahum iii : 10; Isaiah xiii : 16; and II. Chronicles xxv : 12.

This verse, then, means that all the horrors of war shall come on Babylon just as Babylon had brought all the horrors of war on Jerusalem and the Hebrews. And so great is the wickedness of Babylon, that happy shall he be who shall punish her with the same awful cruelties which she has made others feel.

What prophecy shows that this is the meaning of these last two verses? Read Isaiah xiii: 1, 6, 9, 11, and from 16 to 22.

Thirty-fourth Sunday.

THE PROVERBS.

CHAPTER I.

The proverbs of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel.

7. THE fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

8. My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

9. For they *shall be* an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.

10. My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.

11. If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause:

12. Let us swallow them up alive, as the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit:

13. We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil:

14. Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse:

15. My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path:

16. For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood.

17. Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird.

18. And they lay wait for their *own* blood; they lurk privily for their *own* lives.

19. So *are* the ways of every one that is greedy of gain; *which* taketh away the life of the owners thereof.

WHAT is a proverb? *Answer.* A short, wise saying which expresses something which all people see to be true.

All people may not see that a proverb is true when it is spoken the first time, but, as they think of it and find out its meaning, they see it to be true.

Whose proverbs are these in this book?

How many proverbs did Solomon speak? See I. Kings iv : 32.

This lesson does not contain regular proverbs, but is a part of the introduction to the book of Proverbs.

Three things are spoken of in this lesson: first, The Fear of God; secondly, Obedience to Parents; and thirdly, Bad Company.

What does the wise Solomon say is the beginning of knowledge?

The fear of the Lord means Reverence for God, or Respect for God.

How is Reverence for God the beginning of knowledge? *Answer.* If a person wishes to begin to gain knowledge, he must have respect for Teachers of knowledge; and, as God is the Source of all knowledge, he must, first of all, have respect for what the Infinite Teacher says.

What is the difference between 'wisdom' and 'instruction'? *Answer.* Wisdom is the knowledge how to perceive what is just and right and true. Instruction is the *teaching* of knowledge.

Why do 'fools' despise wisdom and instruction? *Answer.* Because they think they know enough already.

A wise man always thinks that he knows very little of what there is *to be* known; and a fool thinks it is not worth the labor to try to be wiser than he is.

What is the subject of the next two verses?

Does Solomon mean by 'my son' his own son or not?

How tender and affectionate are these words in the lips of this venerable and wise king to every young man!

Explain '*hear* the instruction of thy father.'

What is 'the law of thy mother'?

What is it 'that shall be an ornament of grace'?

An ornament of grace is a graceful ornament. A crown or a wreath gives the head dignity and beauty; and so a wise son instructed by a wise father, and remembering the rules of a good mother, will have dignity and grace in his face and his behavior.

'And chains about thy neck': how will they be like chains about the neck?

Which was the greater ornament to Joseph, his respect for his father or the chains which Pharaoh put about his neck? Read Genesis xli : 42.

What is the subject of the rest of the lesson?

'Come with us': 'sinners love company in sin; the angels that fell were tempters almost as soon as they were sinners.'

What is meant by 'entice'?

'Consent thou not' to what?

Notice carefully that what the wicked say to entice a young man reaches through the fourteenth verse, and in the fifteenth verse the opposite part of the sentence begins. Read like this: If they say—what is in the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth verses—'then, my son, walk not thou,' etc.

What do they propose to do—in the eleventh verse?

Does 'lurk privily for the innocent without cause' mean that they would kill the innocent without any reason for it?

Think of the robbers of those Eastern lands; of the Arabs of Syria now, as they go out to plunder. No matter who comes, nor how innocent he may be, they look for him privily, and seize him or shed his blood if he resists.

What do they mean by 'swallow them up alive as the grave'? *Answer.* Perhaps the young man might think, If we shed blood, we will be found out, and they say, No, we will

destroy them utterly and bury them in the earth. See Genesis xxxvii : 24.

What is the reason which they give for doing this ?

What is meant by 'all precious substance' ?

They call it *precious substance* ; but a robber's or a murderer's wealth is blood-stained wealth.

What is the 'spoil' ?

Explain 'cast in *thy* lot with *us*.'

See how the money and the booty are held up as the enticement to 'come with us.' Be one of us, and we will all do it together. 'They do not threaten or argue, but entice with flattery and fair speech.'

What does 'all have one purse' mean ?

What does Solomon direct a young man tempted in this way to do ?

Explain 'Refrain thy foot,' etc.

What reasons for not walking with them, in the sixteenth verse ?

What kind of evil do they 'make haste' to do ?

Does 'in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird' mean that, if you set your net or trap for a bird while the bird sees you, you will not catch the bird, or that, even though the bird see you spread the net, it will yet be enticed by the bait into it ?

What is the net in which these robbers are taken ?

Answer. The just laws which will punish them.

'The murderer and the thief see the jail and the gallows before them, and yet they rush into sin and rush on in it.'

How do they lay wait for their own blood ? Read Psalm vii : 15, 16.

How do they lurk privily for their own lives ?

Does the first part of the nineteenth verse mean that every one greedy of gain does the same as a robber ?

What does 'greedy of gain' mean ?

People who are greedy in making money are tempted to cheat and to be cruel toward others, and even to rob the poor, the widow, and the fatherless. Many men are so anxious to make money that they actually do these horrid crimes.

What does the Scripture say about those that love money ? Read I. Timothy vi : 10.

Can one make money without loving money ?

What is it 'which taketh away the life of the owners thereof' ? How ?

'The greediness of gain hurries them on to those practices which will not suffer them to live out half their days.'

Thirty-fifth Sunday.

P R O V E R B S .

CHAPTER VI.

6. Go to the ant, thou sluggard ; consider her ways, and be wise :
7. Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler,
8. Provideth her meat in the summer, *and* gathereth her food in the harvest.
9. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard ? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep ?
10. *Yet* a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep :
11. So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.
16. These six *things* doth the Lord hate : yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him :
17. A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,
18. An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,
19. A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

CHAPTER X.

1. The proverbs of Solomon. A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son *is* the heaviness of his mother.

7. The memory of the just *is* blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot.

What is a sluggard?

A sluggard is an indolent, idle, slothful fellow, who cannot be started up to work of any kind.

Why does Solomon send the sluggard to the ant?

The ant and the bee are two of the smallest insects, but they are great workers, never idle or slothful.

How is the sluggard to learn to be wise by considering the ways of the ant?

What does the seventh verse say that the ant does not have?

The ants, like sheep, go in companies, and like sheep, they have no one among them who is their ruler or overseer or guide.

What does the eighth verse say that the ant does without them?

For what does she provide food in the summer and in harvest?

In cold countries the ant lies torpid in the winter, and does not need food gathered in summer; but in the warmer countries, the food she gathers in summer may be used in winter.

Learn from the ant how to provide, O sluggard! She has more work and wit than thou.

But does Solomon *say* that the ant lays up food for *winter*?

Suppose that an infidel should say that what Solomon says about the ant in this verse is not true, because we now know that the ant does not eat in winter, how would you answer him?

Answer. First, that Solomon does not really *say* that the ant lays up food to eat in *winter*. Secondly, that, if he did, there

may be some kind of ant in the warmer climate of Palestine which does or did eat food in winter. Thirdly, that, if there is no such kind of ant, Solomon spoke according to what every body believed, just as God spoke to Job out of the whirlwind about the *foundations* of the earth, and as he speaks about the rising of the sun and the going down of the same.

What one thing is there, in the ninth verse, which a sluggard *does*?

But the sluggard is so dull and heavy with sleep that it seems as if he would never be done. *How long*, O sluggard, *wilt thou sleep*? The ant has been long at her work. The bee has long been on the wing. The thrifty workman has filled the morning *full* of work. Even the very spider has woven her web. When *wilt thou* arise out of thy sleep?

Who says the tenth verse, Solomon or the sluggard?

Talk to a sluggard, tell him of the ant and the bee and of busy men, and of what he ought to do, and this is all the answer you get: 'Just a little more sleep; let me turn myself over once more, and then I will arise.'

What two things will come upon a sluggard who does not break away from his sluggishness?

Like what will poverty come?

As a traveller keeps directly on his way and makes progress all the while, so will poverty come, making progress all the while, the sluggard growing poorer and poorer.

How will his poverty show itself in his possessions?

Read Proverbs xxiv : 30-34.

Like what will want come?

Want is the very hunger and nakedness of poverty, and the sluggard might as well try to drive off an armed man as to drive off the fierce attack of hunger and cold.

How can a man be a sluggard in respect to his soul?

How many things are mentioned in the sixteenth verse which God hates?

What is the difference between their being hateful and abominable?

What are the first three things?

What is it that keeps men from seeking God? Read Psalm x : 4.

It was probably pride that made Satan fall from heaven. He wanted to be as great as God. And pride rises up in a wicked man's heart against God. He wants to have his own way, as if it were better than God's way.

What shows that God especially hates lying lips? Read Revelation xxi : 8, 27; xxii : 15.

God loves to have the truth known just as it is. If all men should tell things differently from what they are, who could know what to do? Heaven itself would be put into confusion if liars were to enter there.

Can you think of more than one class of people meant by 'hands that have shed innocent blood'?

What are the next two things in the next verse?

Which does this verse say is abominable to God, wicked imaginations or a *heart* that deviseth wicked imaginations?

What is meant by devising wicked imaginations?

And such a heart can never be so hid that it is not abominable in the sight of God. Read Proverbs iv : 23.

Does feet that be swift in running to mischief include people who go without thought into mischief?

See how the different parts of the body are named: the *eyes*—a proud look; the *lips*—lying lips; the *hands*, the *heart*, the *feet*. These are all what one does in respect to himself—the other two things have to do with our neighbors.

What are the other two of the seven things?

What two persons does a false witness injure?

Can a person be God's child who lets his heart and

body go free to such 'imaginings' and such kinds of 'mischief' ?

Repeat the first proverb.

What is it in a 'wise son' which makes his father glad ?

What wise son in the Scriptures made a glad father ?
Read Genesis xlvi : 29.

What is it in a foolish son which gives his mother a heavy heart ?

What foolish sons in the Scriptures gave their *father* a heavy heart ? Read I. Samuel ii : 12, 17 ; iv : 15-18 ; and II. Samuel xviii : 33.

Repeat the next proverb.

Does the 'memory of the just' mean the remembrance of the just before he is dead or after ?

Does 'just' mean honest with God and man, or does it simply mean a good and upright man ?

Give any examples from the Scriptures of just men whose memory is blessed.

What is meant by 'the name of the wicked shall rot' ?

While the names of such men as Moses and David shall be blessed by all people, the name of such a man as Judas the Traitor shall remain only as a disgusting and a rotten thing.

Thirty-sixth Sunday.

PROVERBS.

CHAPTER XI.

25. The liberal soul shall be made fat : and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.

CHAPTER XV.

1. A soft answer turneth away wrath : but grievous words stir up anger.

CHAPTER XX.

1. Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

CHAPTER XXII.

1. A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor rather than silver and gold.

CHAPTER XXV.

21. If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink:

22. For thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head, and the **LORD** shall reward thee.

CHAPTER XXVII.

6. Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

13. He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall find mercy.

Repeat the first proverb of the lesson.

Does it mean that the liberal soul shall be made fat with riches or fat with satisfaction?

Explain 'he that watereth' and 'shall be watered.'

A stingy soul is made lean: it is close and small and unhappy. Liberality sets in motion all the pleasantest feelings of the soul, many more pleasant feelings than receiving does. He that gives money to water the thirsty and feed the hungry or clothe the naked has greater happiness than the thirsty or hungry or naked who receive it.

Does liberality of soul mean merely liberality in money?

In the next proverb, what is meant by 'a soft answer'?

An angry man expects the one against whom he is angry to be angry in return; but if, instead of answering harshly or angrily, he answers calmly and mildly, the angry man is ashamed of his anger.

How do grievous words stir up anger?

It is as if anger was a fire just ready to die out, and grievous words stir up the embers to be a flame again.

How is wine a mocker ?

Wine is beautiful in the glass—it looks pleasant to the taste, it seems to promise much pleasure ; but it tempts one on to more and more, until it gives suffering instead of pleasure. It promises much pleasure—it mocks us with much pain.

Show from the Scriptures that wine is a mocker ? See Proverbs xxiii : 29-32.

What is meant by 'strong drink' ?

How is strong drink 'raging' ? *Answer.* It makes men raging or boisterous. It is like a raging devil in a man, which makes him noisy and reckless in the street and at home.

How are persons deceived by wine and strong drink ?

Wine, even in Solomon's time, was deceitful, leading men on from worse to worse. And wine in our country is far worse than the wine of Judea.

What persons in the Scriptures were deceived by using wine ? Read Genesis ix : 20, 21 ; I. Samuel xxv : 36 ; II. Samuel xiii : 28 ; I. Kings xx : 16 ; Esther i : 7, 8, and 10, 11 ; Daniel v : 1-4.

Before what is 'a good name' to be chosen ?

For what are 'great riches' ever chosen ?

How does a good name give the same things which riches give ?

Which would you rather have, great riches and a bad name, or a good name without riches ?

How is a good name to be obtained ?

What is 'loving favor' ? *Answer.* 'The sweetness of being esteemed and loved by our neighbors.'

All the gold and silver cannot make people love you, and no one can be happy unless he is loved. Even a child can have loving favor.

Why is loving favor better than silver and gold ?

Are a good name and loving favor better than a good conscience ?

What reason does Solomon give for giving food and water to our enemies ?

Explain how such acts are coals of fire on an enemy's head.

'The idea of a furnace for smelting mineral ore is introduced here. It is necessary that the burning coals should be above the ore as well as beneath it. Love poured out in return for hatred will be what the burning coals are to the ore—it will purify and melt it.'

What law did Moses give like this ? Read Exodus xxiii : 4.

Who quoted these words in the New Testament ?
See Romans xii : 20.

A tract was once written on the subject, '*The Man who Killed his Neighbors*', which is a story of a good man, who, by giving good for evil, killed the anger and hatred of wicked men around him until they were good and loving neighbors.

Are we always to expect that every single act of returning evil for good will melt down an enemy's hatred ?

Show the highest example of giving good for evil in the Scriptures. Read Romans v : 8 and 10, and Luke xxiii : 34.

But, if we do not gain over our enemy, what reward shall there be ?

The exercise of love is its own reward, and, if it does win the enemy, it give the happiness which God made always to go with its use..

What two things are contrasted in the next proverb ?

What are a friend's *wounds* ?

If a friend tells us that we have faults, then we can correct them and become better than we were. There is no one who

has no faults ; and if a man never has any one tell him that he has faults, he has good reason to think that he has no faithful friends.

Show from the Scriptures how the kisses of an enemy are deceitful. Read II. Samuel xx : 9, 10 ; Matthew xxvi : 49, 50.

What is meant by 'covereth his sins' ?

Show from the Scriptures one man who covered his sins. Read Joshua vii : 20, 21.

Does it mean covering his sins from others, from self, or from God ?

How are we to obtain mercy from God ?

Can we obtain mercy if we do not confess ?

Confess to whom ?

Can we obtain mercy if we confess and do not forsake ?

What king in one of the psalms confessed and forsook his sin and found mercy ?

What son in the gospels confessed and forsook and found mercy ? See Luke xv : 18-23.

Thirty-seventh Sunday.

ECCLESIASTES.

CHAPTER XII.

1. REMEMBER now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them ;

2. While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened ; nor the clouds return after the rain :

3. In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened ;

4. And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the

grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird ; and all the daughters of music shall be brought low ;

5. Also *when* they shall be afraid of *that which is* high, and fears *shall be* in the way, and the almond-tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail ; because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets :

6. Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern :

7. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was : and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

Who wrote the book of Ecclesiastes ? See chapter i : 1, 12, and 16.

Whom does Solomon tell to 'Remember' their Creator ?

Notice that he does not say Remember thy God, or Remember the Lord, but Remember him who *created* thee.

'Remember now': when does now mean ?

What a shameful thing it is, and a mean thing, too, to use up the best part of life for ourselves, and then to give our wise and good Creator only the poor end of life !

What 'evil days' are meant by 'while the evil days come not' ?

If a child neglects his Creator in the days of his youth, the evil days of sickness or of great troubles may so overwhelm him that he will find it very hard to begin to serve God.

Read the rest of the verse in this way, 'Nor *those* years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.'

No pleasure in what ?

If, when you are young, the only things which you take pleasure in are what you taste, see, feel, and hear with the body, when the body grows old, you will be weary of these things, and be ready to say, I have no pleasure in these years of old age.

Does 'the sun,' 'the light,' 'the moon,' and 'the stars' mean the heavenly bodies, or are they figures of speech for joyfulness and mirth and prosperity ?

The heavenly bodies look dim to very old people, because their eye-sight fails ; the sport and mirth and gay spirits of youth fail.

What is meant by ‘nor the clouds return after the rain’ ?

Read in this way, Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days, etc., while the sun, etc., are not darkened, and while the clouds do not return after the rain. Generally after the rain is over the sun comes out, and the clouds pass away. But to the old, one storm follows another.

When does the third verse say that these things will happen ?

The next four verses are a very beautiful poetical description of the body in old age. In the third and fourth verses the body is likened to a house : the ‘keepers of the house’ are the head, the arms, and the hands ; the ‘strong men’ are the feet, knees, and legs, the strongest members ; the ‘grinders’ are the women within the house, who grind with the upper and lower millstones, that is, the teeth which grind the food ; ‘those that look out of the windows’ are the eyes.

Where in the Scriptures is the body compared to a house ? See Job iv : 19 ; 2 Corinthians v : 1.

How do ‘the keepers’ of this house tremble when it is old ?

How do ‘the strong men bow themselves’ ?

Why do ‘the grinders cease’ ?

How are those that look out of the windows darkened ? Read Genesis xxvii : 1.

‘The eyelids open and shut like the casements of a window.’ In the fourth verse ‘the doors in the streets or *toward* the street’ are the lips ; ‘the sound of grinding’ is the silence of the mouth in eating ; ‘the voice of the bird’ is the bird’s song in the very early morning, when old people rise ; and ‘the

daughters of music' are the voice and the ear, with which to make and to enjoy music.

Where in the Scriptures are the lips represented as doors ?
See Psalm cxli : 3.

Explain 'the sound of the grinding is low.'

Explain 'rise up at the voice of the bird.'

The least noise, like the chirp or the twittering of a bird, awakens the aged from their disturbed slumbers, and calls them up.

The next two verses give other beautiful descriptions of the old man—different from that of the house.

Why are old men afraid of that which is high ?

How are their fears in the way where they walk ?

What is meant by 'the almond-tree shall flourish' ?

Answer. The almond-tree has white blossoms, and the white head of the old man is like an almond-tree in full blossom.

What is meant by 'the grasshopper is a burden' ?

'Old men can bear nothing. The lightest thing, no heavier than a grasshopper, sets heavy both on their bodies and on their minds ; a little thing sinks and breaks them.'

Explain how 'desire shall fail.'

What is the reason given at the end of this verse why all these things come upon the aged ?

What is 'his long home' ?

How do 'the mourners go about the streets' ?

This does not mean that the mourners dressed in black go about the streets after the funeral is over. It is the custom in the East to hire women to mourn for the dead, and they go through the streets to their place of wailing and lamentation.

What is the meaning of 'or ever' in the sixth verse ? *Answer.* As soon as.

We may read it in two ways : 'and the mourners go about the streets *as soon* as the silver cord be loosed,' etc. ; or, *as*

soon as the silver cord be loosed or the golden bowl, etc., *then* (seventh verse) shall the dust return, etc.

How many things are spoken of in this verse as broken or unloosed?

A lamp of gilded glass or gilded china ware, looking like a golden bowl, is, in the East, hung from the ceiling by a cord of twisted silver and silk; and as, when the silver cord is loosened, the golden bowl falls and breaks, and the light is put out, so is the light of life put out at death.

At a fountain or well or cistern in the East, the pitcher is sometimes let down by a rope around a wheel. And as when the pitcher is dashed against the stone, and the water spilled, or the wheel is broken, so that no water can be drawn, so is the water of life spilled from the body at death, and the machinery by which life was carried on broken.

Explain, now, 'silver cord,' 'golden bowl,' 'pitcher,' 'fountain,' and 'wheel.'

What, then, becomes of the body, according to the seventh verse?

'To the earth *as it was.*' As it was *when?* Read Genesis iii: 19.

The very body in which you and I live, so beautiful in its form, in its face, and eyes, so curious in its hands and feet and limbs, so wonderful in its heart and blood and brain, so mysterious in the life which is in it, must one day crumble back, all of it, into particles of dust, like those of which God so wonderfully formed it at first.

What will become of the spirit?

How did God give the spirit at the first? Read Genesis ii: 7; Job xxxiii: 4.

Does Solomon mean in this chapter that all old people are miserable? Read Proverbs xvi: 31, and xx: 29.

Is it desirable that we should live to a good old age? See Genesis xv: 15, xxv: 8; Job v: 26.

To make old age happy, what are we to do in our youth?

Thirty-eighth Sunday.

ECCLESIASTES.

CHAPTER XII.

8. Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher; all *is* vanity.
9. And, moreover, because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, *and* set in order many proverbs.
10. The Preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and *that which was* written *was* upright, *even* words of truth.
11. The words of the wise *are* as goads, and as nails fastened *by* the masters of assemblies, *which* are given from one shepherd.
12. And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books *there is* no end; and much study *is* a weariness of the flesh.
13. Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this *is* the whole *duty* of man.
14. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil.

Where, in the book of Ecclesiastes, has the Preacher before said 'Vanity of vanities,' etc.? Find it in the first chapter.

'Vanity of vanities' means the most empty vanity, as 'servant of servants' means the lowest servant, and 'song of songs' means the sweetest song, and 'holy of holies' means the most holy place, and the 'heaven of heavens' the highest heavens.

'All is vanity': all what?

Does Solomon mean that the whole world is in *vain*?

Surely God did not make the world in vain. It is full of good things, which can give solid satisfaction. Its sea and land and sky and stars, its beasts and birds, its wealth and beauty were not made in vain. But, if any one tries to use them only to satisfy the taste and sight and smell and hearing and feeling of the *body*, they give no satisfaction. They leave the soul of man empty, in the very emptiness of emptiness.

How did the Preacher show to the people that he was 'wise'?

In what three books of the Bible did Solomon teach the people knowledge?

Probably Solomon wrote the Song of Solomon and the Proverbs before he wrote Ecclesiastes; and so he says he *still* taught the people in this book.

‘He gave good heed’: to what?

How many proverbs did he seek out and set in order?

For whom, then, did he ‘set in order’ the proverbs?

Are there any proverbs in the book of Ecclesiastes?

What kind of words did ‘the Preacher seek to find out’?

‘Acceptable’: to whom?

Solomon had been through all the pleasures of life, had had riches and wisdom and honor, and all that heart could wish; and, to make the people see what is wise and what is foolish, what is good and what is wicked, he ‘finds out’ figures of speech and sharp and brilliant sentences, which will stick fast in the people’s minds.

What is meant by what ‘was written was *upright*’?

Must words which pretend to be wise words, be words of truth in order to be acceptable?

Perhaps Solomon taught the people his proverbs and wise sayings in assemblies which gathered to hear him speak. Read I. Kings iv : 34, and x : 1-3, 8.

What are ‘goads’?

The words of wise men are sharp-pointed, and will pierce the dullest mind, as an ox-goad will pierce an ox-hide.

How are the words of the wise like ‘nails’?

Wise words, like *goads*, push on the *dull*; wise words, like *nails*, hold firm the fickle and the wavering.

Who are meant by ‘masters of assemblies’? *Answer.*

The chief teachers or presiding officers of the congregation.

How do they fasten their words as nails?

‘Which are given from one shepherd’: what are given

from one shepherd—the assemblies or the masters, or the nails or the words of the wise?

Who is the one Shepherd who gives the words of highest wisdom?

Does 'by these be admonished,' in the twelfth verse, mean Be admonished by these words of the wise, or Be admonished in respect to making many books and in respect to much study?

What does 'admonished' mean?

Why does he admonish him that there is no end of making books?

Many persons think they may find happiness if they can but write and publish a book, or be the author of many books; but Solomon means that, if you should be the author of many books, you would still wish to be the writer of more. Making books which all the world will read, cannot itself give satisfaction, any more than gold can satisfy the soul.

How does 'much study weary the flesh'?

The body is tired with the labor of study, and the soul cannot be surely profited by human learning. 'Do not expect,' Solomon means, 'that books or study or human wisdom will give you solid satisfaction, more than the world itself.'

What does he mean by 'the whole matter'? *Answer.* The whole matter of life.

Solomon has said that all of life, if it is lived for this world only, is empty and vanity. He said, 'I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.' What is life, then, good for? 'The *conclusion* of the whole matter is this.'

What two things does he say are the whole conclusion?

For what reason should he do these things?

Explain 'whole duty of man.'

What great reason is there, given in the fourteenth verse, why man should do his whole duty ?

What is meant by 'bring every *work* into judgment' ?

Answer. Every doing, every deed.

What besides every work will be brought into judgment ?

Every secret thing, good or evil; nothing can escape. All deeds, and plans, and thoughts, and imaginations, and desires will be judged.

If we do the whole duty of man, will we be condemned or not at the judgment ?

Have you always done the two things which are the whole duty of man ?

How, then, can you escape being condemned at that great day ? Repeat John iii : 16, 17.

Thirty-ninth Sunday.

REVIEW LESSON FOR THE THIRD QUARTER OF THE YEAR.

In what books of the Bible have the lessons been this quarter ?

What four psalms ?

THE NINETIETH PSALM.

What does the title of the Ninetieth Psalm say the psalm is ?

What is God called in this psalm ?

To what is God's life compared ?

To what is man's life compared ?

What is the *cause* why man's life is cut short ?

What is the *reason* why God cuts it short ?

In what way is God's anger seen when it is cut off ?

What is it to have the *beauty* of God upon *us* ?

How does that make us glad and joyful all our days ?

THE NINETY-FIRST PSALM.

What is the subject of this psalm ?
 To what is God likened in the first two verses ?
 From what things does he promise to protect us ?
 Do these things represent spiritual enemies or not ?
 Who once quoted a part of this psalm to our Lord ?
 In what four ways does the last part of the psalm
 show that God will love the man who trusts in him ?
 Who can have the long life and salvation promised in
 the last verse ?

THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRD PSALM.

What five things does David thank God for in the
 first five verses ?
 What wonderful acts of God does David describe ?
 Show how he represents the height of God's mercy.
 Show how he represents the breadth of God's forgive-
 ness.
 How does he represent the tenderness of God's pity ?
 How does he describe God in the last part of the
 psalm ?

THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SEVENTH PSALM.

What time does this psalm celebrate ?
 What does the first part of the psalm show ?
 What does the second part show ?
 What does the third part show ?
 Explain 'right hand forget her cunning' and 'tongue
 cleave to the roof of my mouth.'
 How do you explain the harsh wishes against Baby-
 lon in the last part of the psalm ?

THE PROVERBS.

What is a proverb ?
 What three things are spoken of in the introduction
 to the proverbs ?
 How is the fear of the Lord the beginning of knowledge ?
 How are parents' instructions ornaments to the head
 and neck ?

What kind of wicked people does he describe to represent bad company ?

What is the strongest part in their enticement ?

For what reasons does Solomon advise young men not to go with them ?

To whom does Solomon send the sluggard ? For what ?

What is the result of the sluggard's sloth ?

What seven things are an abomination unto God ?

Repeat some of the proverbs of Solomon.

What is it in a wise son which makes a father glad, and in a foolish son which makes a mother heavy-hearted ?

How is the liberal soul made fat ?

Why does a soft answer turn away wrath ?

Show how wine mocks and deceives.

What persons in the Scriptures were deceived by wine ?

Why is a good name rather to be chosen than great riches ?

What good thing is better than a good name ?

What is the best way to melt an enemy ?

Why is it better to have the wounds of a faithful friend than the kisses of an enemy ?

What two things is it necessary for us sinful men to do in order to find mercy ?

ECCLESIASTES.

What is the meaning of the word ECCLESIASTES ?

What does he tell us to do in our youth ?

How does he describe the body as a house in old age ?

Explain 'the almond-tree shall flourish.'

Explain 'the mourners go about the streets.'

How does he describe death by a lamp and a fountain ?

What does he say becomes of the body and the spirit at death ?

What does he mean by 'vanity of vanities' ?

Explain the words of the wise are as 'goads' and as 'nails.'

What is 'the conclusion of the whole matter'?

Where will every thing we do and think be tested at the last?

What is the only sure way of enduring that test?

Read I. John ii: 1, 2.

Fortieth Sunday.

THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-NINTH PSALM.

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

1. O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me.
2. Thou knowest my down-sitting, and mine up-rising ; thou understandest my thought afar off.
3. Thou compassest my path, and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.
4. For *there is* not a word in my tongue, *but*, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether.
5. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me.
6. *Such knowledge is* too wonderful for me ; it is high, I cannot *attain* unto it.
7. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit ? or whither shall I flee from thy presence ?
8. If I ascend up into heaven, thou *art* there : if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou *art there*.

DAVID has been thinking of the knowledge of God : how it knows every thing, however little, and how it knows all things, however great, and how God himself is everywhere present ; and in this psalm he is astonished at God's knowledge, and praises him as the Omnipotent God.

Perhaps David wrote this psalm when he was young, and when he was accused of wishing to kill King Saul and make himself king. If he did, this psalm is his solemn appeal to God that he knows that he is innocent of any such thing.

What two things does David say of the Lord, in the first verse ?

What is the difference between 'searched' and 'known'?

David says searched *me*, as if he had been thinking what a whole world of life there was in himself: how many thoughts and feelings, how many deeds and words, how many places he had been in, how many persons he had met, how much he had felt and thought and done alone by himself. 'Thou, O Lord,' he says, 'hast searched the whole world of my life, and hast known it all.'

What two things does David say that God knows, in the second verse?

What is meant by 'my down-sitting' and 'mine uprising'?

Does it make God appear greater or smaller to think that he notices all such small acts as sitting down and rising up?

What other kind of God's knowledge, in the last part of the verse?

Is God really 'afar off' from any of us? Read Acts xvii : 27.

One of the most wonderful things about God's knowledge is, that, though he were as far from us as the universe is long, yet he understands every thought in an instant. God's knowledge is not hindered by distance.

Does 'my thought' mean my plan which I am thinking of carrying out, or every thought in my mind?

What does 'compassest my path' mean?

To compass any thing is to go about it, and to compass one's path is as if a person should go around a person who is going along on his path. Read Job xxxi : 4.

What else does he compass besides his path?

It is as if God goes all around our bed at night and looks on us from every side.

Is it only one path or more that God is acquainted with ?

Men are most tempted to sin when on a path or journey away from home, because the restraints of relatives and neighbours are not present, or when in secret, as in a bed-chamber, they think they are not seen by any human eye. But when we go out on our path from home, when we are on a journey among strangers, when we lie down at night, when we are in the most secret place, God sees and knows all our ways.

What other thing does the fourth verse say God knows ?

Can you give any other passage of Scripture which proves that God notices every word of our speech ?

How wonderful this is ! How quickly the wisest man is bewildered if he tries to hear what several different persons are saying at the same time ! But God does not grow confused by hearing at once every word of every person in the whole world.

What does 'knowest it altogether' mean ?

Although God knows all things, he knows each thing *exactly* : he knows the whole of it and the parts of it clearly and thoroughly. Not one word on your tongue but he knows it fully and without mistake.

What is the meaning of 'beset me' ?

If any one of us should try to get away from God, wherever he might go God would still be near him, as if he were a person determined to make us feel that he was keeping watch of us.

What is meant by the figure 'laid thine hand upon me' ?

God is represented as a man through these verses ; and he not only keeps close to us, but is so near that he can lay his hand on us.

'Man is no more able to withdraw himself from the presence

of God than he is to reach a place where the heavens are not over him.'

'Such knowledge is too wonderful for me': too wonderful for me to know or too wonderful for me to understand? Read Job xlvi : 3.

What is meant by saying such knowledge 'is high'?

Answer. It knows great and high things.

What does 'I can not *attain* unto it' mean? *Answer.*

My mind is so little that I can not reach up to it.

A man's little mind can not even comprehend what God's great and high knowledge *is*. 'I can not admire it enough, for I can not really conceive of it as it is.'

What is the proper and plain answer to the two questions of the seventh verse? Read too Jeremiah xxiii : 24.

Does 'thy Spirit' mean thy Holy Spirit or spiritual life and power?

Explain 'go *from* thy Spirit' and 'flee *from* thy presence.'

See the difference between 'go' and 'flee.' First he thinks of going slowly, as if he might in a long time get away from the place where God's Spirit is. Then he thinks of *fleeing*, as if with his utmost speed he could not get beyond God's presence.

Who once tried to flee from God's presence? Read Genesis iii : 8 and Jonah i : 3, 4.

In the eighth verse, in what direction does David suppose he might go first to escape God's presence?

In what direction does he next suppose he might go?

By *make my bed* in hell we suppose David means, if I should go to the very bottom of hell and try to cover myself with its darkness, I would find thee there. Read Job xxvi : 6 and Proverbs xv : 11.

Is God present in hell itself?

How is God differently present in heaven and in hell?

Are the inhabitants of hell glad to have him present ?

Are the inhabitants of heaven ever sorry that he is present ?

‘Should any one murder himself to end his troubles, to escape the remorse of conscience or the consequence of his sins, he must be disappointed.’ He would then still be in God’s presence.

Forty-first Sunday.

THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-NINTH PSALM.

9. *If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;*

10. Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

11. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me ; even the night shall be light about me.

12. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee ; but the night shineth as the day : the darkness and the light *are* both alike *to thee*.

13. For thou hast possessed my reins : thou hast covered me in my mother’s womb.

14. I will praise thee ; for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made : marvellous *are* thy works ; and *that* my soul knoweth right well.

15. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, *and* curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.

16. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect ; and in thy book all *my members* were written, *which* in continuance were fashioned, when as yet *there was* none of them.

How wonderfully David shows in this psalm God’s wonderful omnipresence ! In the eighth verse, he supposes himself to mount up to the very height of heaven and to go down so as to lay his bed on the very bottom of hell, and *there* in heaven and in hell, before he reaches the place, God is.

In what other direction, in the ninth verse, does he suppose he may escape God ?

What are ‘the wings of the morning’ ? *Answer.* The

beams of the morning light, which spread out like outstretched wings.

What sea did David mean when he wrote, 'the uttermost parts of the sea'?

If we think that 'the great sea' was west of Palestine, and the uttermost parts of the sea were the very furthest end of the world, what a beautiful description this verse is: If I could take the wings of the morning light in the distant east, and as fast as light flies could fly to the furthest west, to the uttermost bounds of the sea, even there I could not escape thee.'

What does the tenth verse say God will be there, even in the uttermost parts of the sea, to do?

Does 'thy hand lead me' show that David thinks God is friendly to him, although he knows him so well?

See in Amos ix : 2-4 the opposite description of God's *angry* omnipresence.

Is there any meaning in speaking of 'thy *right* hand' after speaking of 'thy hand'?

The *right* hand is the strong hand; the left hand might lead, but the *right* hand would be used to hold up. Go where we will, up to heaven, down to hell, out to the ends of the earth, our God is there to lead us and to hold us up if we are his.

The same thing which should keep us from sin should encourage us to do right; that is, the thought that we are never out of the sight and the protection of God.

In what other way now does David suppose, in the eleventh verse, that he might escape from God's knowledge?

Show the meaning of 'surely the darkness shall cover me'?

Does 'even the night shall be light about me' mean that it *seemed* so to David or *was* so to God?

What is the force of 'Yea' in the next verse? *Answer.* He thinks again what he has said, and says, Yes, indeed, or, Yes, it is truly so.

Why can not darkness hide from God? *Answer.*
Because God's mind does not see through bodily eyes
like ours.

Our eyes are so made that we can not see without light, and when there is no light it is dark to us; but God's eyes could see before any sun or star was created.

Can the night really shine as the day?

God might have made our eyes so that the night would seem as light as day to us; just as the owl can see better by night than by day, or just as we can see better in a shaded room than in looking at the sun. God can see through the darkest darkness, just as he can look into the brightest sun.

Does the last of the verse mean that darkness and light are both alike to God so far as his knowledge of them is concerned, or that he does not see any difference in darkness and light?

God's mind sees through every thing. Whichever way it turns it drives darkness and ignorance away, as the sun, wherever it shines, drives darkness away.

The thirteenth verse shows how God knows all secret things and open things: 'Thou hast possessed my reins' means the same as 'Thou hast held my heart in thy hand.'

Read the last part of the thirteenth verse with the emphasis on *Thou*—*Thou* hast covered me, etc. It means, Before my mother gave me birth, *thou* didst prepare me to be born.

What reasons does he give, in the fourteenth verse, for praising God?

Show how the body and mind are wonderfully made.

Think how curiously the hand is made to do so many things with, the arm to turn in so many directions, the eye to see with, the joints of the bones to walk or run or stand or sit or lie or climb with, the blood and skin and heart and breath, the mind to remember and imagine and hope and feel with!

Show how they are fearfully made.

Think how little a thing will kill the body, stop the heart from beating, or let out the blood. Think how easily the eye may be destroyed or the body made sick.

What does 'marvellous' mean?

What works does David mean are marvellous—his works in making the body, or his works throughout the world? Psalm xl : 5.

Which works does the *soul* know better, the works of the world or of the body and mind?

What is meant by 'my substance'? *Answer.* The frame-work of my body.

This curious frame-work of the body, which begins before we are born, God himself wisely makes. Even before we are born, and after we turn back to dust in the grave, God knows us and sees us.

What does 'curiously wrought' mean? *Answer.* Delicately and wonderfully joined and jointed together.

This curious body, in limbs and sinews and joints, in face and hands and feet, in brains and spirit, in muscles and veins and nerves, God himself made, and he makes every single body without a single mistake, as if, like a workman, he had a shop in the lowest parts of the earth, where he fitted them together. Read Isaiah lxiv : 8 and Job x : 8, 9, and 10.

What does 'imperfect' mean?

Even before this curious frame-work began to be formed in God's work-shop, God had the pattern in his mind. He knew just how I would look as a full-grown man as well as if I was then full-grown.

What book is meant by 'thy book'? *Answer.* As a workman knows distinctly all the parts of a machine by writing them in a book, so God knew all the members of my body which was to be.

Explain 'which in continuance were fashioned.' *Answer.* Which were made one after the other.

'None of them': none of what?

How did God make the body at the first? Read Genesis ii : 7 and iii : 20.

How wonderful is the far-reaching knowledge of God! How wonderful is his presence everywhere! High in heaven, deep in hell, at the uttermost part of the world, in the blackest darkness, he is present to see and to know all things. As he made us so curiously and fearfully, and knew our body and spirit and our whole life before we were born, we can never escape his presence by going out of this world, or by hiding ourselves in this world, or by trying to forget that there is a God. The only thing for us to do, if we would be happy, is to make friends with him.

Forty-second Sunday.

THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-NINTH PSALM.

17. How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!

18. *If I* should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee.

19. Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God: depart from me, therefore, ye bloody men.

20. For they speak against thee wickedly, *and* thine enemies take *thy name* in vain.

21. Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee?

22. I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies.

23. Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:

24. And see if *there be any* wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

David has spoken in this psalm so far of God's wonderful knowledge and of his wonderful presence everywhere. Now he thinks of the thoughts which are in God's mind.

Does David mean by 'thy thoughts' thy thoughts about myself, or thy thoughts about the whole world?

If God is our enemy, can it be precious to us to think of his thoughts about us?

What is the meaning of 'the sum of them'? Read Psalm xl : 5.

How does he show, in the eighteenth verse, 'how great the sum of them is'?

'The Psalmist once more bursts forth into devout astonishment as he contrasts himself—so entirely dependent on God—with the Almighty.'

'When I awake': it seems as if David, in thinking of God's thoughts at night, had fallen asleep, and in the morning he still finds the same good, all-knowing God watching over him.

Explain 'I am still with thee.'

What other morning-thought of David is like this?

See Psalm iii : 5.

What reason is there from God's presence everywhere why he will slay the wicked?

Does this mean that he will slay them so soon as they become wicked?

'Surely, O God, as nothing good or bad escapes thy knowledge, though the wicked seem now to be prosperous, thou *wilt* slay the wicked in thine own time.'

Because God will slay the wicked, what does David, *therefore*, say to the wicked?

Whom does he mean by 'ye bloody men'?

As David himself was a man of war, he had found men even among his own people who were cruel and revengeful. See how one bloody man was one of his officers at one time in I. Kings ii : 5.

If David was at that time charged with conspiring to kill Saul, he probably meant, 'Surely, thou *wilt* take care of those false and bloody witnesses against me.'

What two things do these wicked and bloody men do?

Why does God have special dislike to those who take his name in vain ?

Prove that every one that takes God's name in vain is God's enemy.

Is it right for David to hate those that hate God ?

What kind of feeling does the last part of the verse show that he feels against such persons ?

David is so lifted up and overwhelmed with feelings of admiration toward so marvellous a God, that he wishes to separate himself entirely from those who have fallen so low as actually to hate God.

But what kind of hatred does the next verse show that he has toward them ?

Is this hatred such that he would be sorry to have them become the friends of God ?

Does a malicious and revengeful hatred ever wish to have an enemy become a friend ?

Whom does David count these persons to be ?

Put the emphasis on the word *mine* : They are *thine* enemies, and I count them *mine* enemies. David loves and admires God as a friend : what God loves he loves, what God hates he hates. Read II. Chronicles xix : 2.

There are two ways of loving and two ways of hating bad people. One way of loving is to love a bad person and all he does ; and another way is to love his happiness, so as to try to get him to leave the wrong that he does. One way of hating is to hate a bad person spitefully, so that we never wish to see any good come to him, even though he should repent and try to be good ; and another way is to hate the wicked man for his wickedness, and be glad to have him stop being wicked. We ought to hate murderers and liars and swearers, for God hates them, and we ought to love these same men when they become good, for God then loves them.

What does David ask God to search him for, in the last verse ?

Would any one who hates others spitefully wish God to know his heart ?

What is the meaning of 'try me' ?

David must think he is innocent, or else that God pardons all his sins. For, unless he believed so, he would not ask that God, whose minute knowledge and presence everywhere he has been praising, to search and know his feelings and thoughts.

What did David wish God to see ?

Do you think he expected God to find or not to find in him any wicked way ?

What is 'the way everlasting' ?

When David asks that God will see if there is any wicked way in him, and then asks that he will lead him in the way everlasting, he really says that he wishes to know and to *forsake* every wicked way so that he may be led into the way everlasting.

What is the subject of the whole psalm ?

A guilty man does not like the thought of the true God. If he should be admitted into heaven, he could not endure the glorious holiness of God. The grave can not place him at a distance from his righteous judge. A God of justice is present even in hell : were it possible for him to fly with the velocity of the sunbeams through the immensity of space, he would still be in the presence of an offended God.

And so a true disciple of God *loves* the thought of God, and he cannot be removed from God. Should the persecutor's cruelty take away his life, his soul will the sooner ascend into the presence of his Father and Friend. The grave cannot separate him from his Saviour's love : even in the place of torment the presence and love of God would prevent his feeling misery ; no dungeon, cavern or mine, however dark or deep, can shut him out from his God.

Forty-third Sunday.

THE ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-EIGHTH PSALM.

1. PRAISE ye the **LORD**. Praise ye the **LORD** from the heavens : Praise him in the heights.
2. Praise ye him, all his angels : praise ye him, all his hosts.
3. Praise ye him, sun and moon : praise him, all ye stars of light.
4. Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that *be* above the heavens.
5. Let them praise the name of the **LORD** : for he commanded, and they were created.
6. He hath also stablished them for ever and ever : he hath made a decree which shall not pass.

THIS is a jubilant song of praise to God. The psalmist's heart goes out to all things in heaven above and earth beneath, calling to them to sing with him the praise of God. We do not know who is the psalmist, but his heart was full of rapture at the thought of God and of his universal praise.

The psalm is divided into two parts. The first part, in the first six verses, calls on all things in heaven to praise God ; the second part, in the next six verses, calls on all things in the earth to praise him. And at the end of the psalm both are united with God's people in praise, in the last two verses.

What are the two parts of the psalm ?

What same words of praise begin and end the psalm ?

The words 'Praise ye the Lord' begin and end all the last five psalms in the book of Psalms. In Hebrew this sentence is one single word, the word Hallelujah. Hal-le-lu, praise ye, Jah, (pronounced Yah,) a shorter word for Jehovah—Praise ye Jah, or Praise ye Jehovah.

How many psalms begin and end in the same way ?

Does 'from the heavens,' in the first verse, mean the same as 'praise him, ye heavens,' in the fourth verse ?

Who are to praise him *from* the heavens ?

What is the difference between 'from the heavens' and 'in the heights'?

Does 'heavens' mean the heaven of the sun and sky and stars, or the heaven of the spiritual life?

Does 'heights' mean the heights of the firmament, or the heights of glory in heavenly life?

To which heavens do 'all his angels' and 'all his hosts,' of the second verse, belong?

To which heavens do 'sun and moon' and 'all the stars of light,' of the third verse, belong?

To which *heights* do the things of the second and third verses belong?

What are angels?

Give the names of different kinds of angels.

How many things can you find which angels do?*

What are the hosts of God?†

What different kinds of hosts are there? See three different kinds in Exodus xii:41; Genesis ii:1; Luke ii:13; and Job xxxviii:7.

Can you think of any way in which the sun and moon and stars offer different praise to God?

The sun, in the strength and fulness of his light, shows the power and fulness of God; the moon, in her changes and milder radiance, shows the different forms and the tenderness of God's goodness; the stars, in their endless variety and multitude, show the infinite variety and unnumbered multitudes of God's good acts.

What a beautiful, poetical expression for bright or shining stars is 'stars of light'!

* We are told in these places: Genesis iii:24; xix:1; xxii:11; Judges vi:11, 12; II. Samuel xxiv:16; I. Kings xix:5; I. Chronicles xxi:12; Psalms xxxiv:7; Isaiah vi:3; Luke ii:18; Matthew xviii:10; Mark viii:38; Luke xv:10; xvi:22; xxii:43; Matthew xxviii:2; John xx:12; Acts v:19; xii:23; vii:53; Galatians iii:19; Hebrews ii:2; I. Peter i:12; Matthew xxiv:31; Revelation v:2 and 11; vii:11; xii:7; xxi:12.

† Look at Genesis xxxii:42; Daniel vii:10; I. Kings xxii:19; Psalm lviii:17; Hebrews xii:22; Deuteronomy xxxiii:2; Revelation v:11.

How is 'heaven of heavens' different from 'heavens' ?

Is there one heaven above another ? Read II. Corinthians xii : 2.

We speak of at least three heavens : first, the heaven of the air, where the birds fly, the winds blow, and the showers are formed ; secondly, the heaven of the firmament, in which the heavenly lights seem to be ; thirdly, the heaven of spiritual beings, where are the angels and the blessed, and where God's dwelling is.

'The heaven of heavens is the highest heaven, as the song of songs is the most excellent song, the God of gods the greatest of the gods, the Lord of lords the most powerful of lords.'

What is meant by the 'waters that be above the heavens' ? See Genesis i : 7.

What do the heavens say in praising God ? See Psalm xix : 1, 2.

In the heavens of matter, we may say that the clouds are in a lower heaven, the moon and sun and the planets in a higher heaven, and the fixed stars in a higher heaven still. And if we could rise high enough away from the earth, we should see a higher heaven still.

In the heavens of spirit we know that angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, and redeemed men are there, and perhaps in different ranks of heavenly society. They are highest and nearest God, we suppose, who are most like him.

Does 'Let them praise' mean 'Permit them to praise' or 'They should praise the name of the Lord' ?

What is the reason why they should praise ?

What other reason is given, in the sixth verse, why all these things should praise God ?

Does this mean that the sun and moon and stars will last for ever ?

So far as the power of any other being to disturb them as God has fixed them is concerned, they will last for ever.

‘He hath made a decree’: a decree in respect to what?

What is a ‘decree’?

What is a ‘decree that *shall not pass*’? Read Job xxxviii : 10–12; Jeremiah v : 22.

Why is our creation a reason that we should praise God?

Why is his unchangeable decree a reason for praising him?

Forty-fourth Sunday.

THE ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-EIGHTH PSALM.

7. Praise the **LORD** from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps:
8. Fire, and hail; snow, and vapors; stormy wind fulfilling his word:
9. Mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars:
10. Beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl:
11. Kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth:
12. Both young men, and maidens; old men, and children:
13. Let them praise the name of the **LORD**: for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven.
14. He also exalteth the horn of his people, the praise of all his saints; even of the children of Israel, a people near unto him. Praise ye the **LORD**.

What things are called to praise God in the second part of the psalm?

How many things in the earth are mentioned in the rest of the psalm?

What is meant by ‘dragons’ and ‘deeps’?

The dragons mean, no doubt, the monsters of the deep. ‘Neither is it against reason that praise should be brought out of the sea, which is filled with so many wonders.’

All the things mentioned in the eighth verse except ‘fire’ are things of the air: do you think the fire of the air, the lightning, is meant?

What do these things show in respect to God?

‘Fire’ shows God’s mysterious power, by which he keeps it kindling and burning and flaming upward; ‘hail’ shows God’s destructive power, by which he pours down his bullets from the skies; ‘snow’ shows the beauty of God’s knowledge and skill in its curious flakes; ‘vapor’ or smoke, his loving-kindness in removing from us what is not needed and what is disagreeable to us; ‘stormy wind fulfilling God’s word’ shows that God’s hand can hold every unmanageable thing. Notice that the contrary things are mentioned together: the hot fire and the cold hail, fire rising upward, hail falling downward; the white snow and foggy vapor or dark smoke, the snow falling to cover the earth, the vapor rising from the earth’s surface. And contrary to all these is the wind, for it blows in storms through the air and interferes with fire and hail, snow and vapor.

Explain, now, the curious ways in which these things worship God.

‘The *stormy wind*, which, with all its wild impetuosity, apparently obeys no law, still executes the commands of God not less than the angels who do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.’

What class of things are called on to praise God in the ninth verse?

Mountains and hills lift themselves up in majesty in praise of the Creator.

Fruitful trees are the same as fruit-trees in contrast with forest trees like the cedars.

What class of things is mentioned in verse ten?

How many kinds of animals?

How do they show God’s praise?

They show his kindness in the wonderful skill with which they are made, in the instincts by which they live, and in providing them for man’s food.

What class of creatures is mentioned in verse eleven?

What contrast in the first part of the verse?

Kings are named as at the head of men, and 'all people' as the great masses of mankind.

How do 'princes and all judges of the earth' differ from 'kings and all people'?

Into what classes are 'all people' divided in the twelfth verse?

'The old, in whose long life is contained a proof of the divine goodness, and the young, whose very freshness and vigor are themselves a praise of God.'

Why in the fifth and thirteenth verses is it said, 'Let them praise the *name* of the Lord' and not Let them praise the Lord?

A good man's *name* means a good man's *reputation* or a good man's *honor*. If you bring his name into contempt, you bring him into contempt; if you praise and honor his name, you praise and honor him. If you take God's *name* in vain, you treat God as if he were a trifle or a nothing. If you praise his name and honor it, you praise and honor him.

What is the reason given in the fifth verse why all *heavenly* things should praise God?

What is the reason, in the thirteenth verse, why all *earthly* things should praise him?

What does 'excellent' mean?

'His name *alone* is excellent': but is no other name than his excellent?

Does 'his glory' mean the glory of his name as it is known among men, or the glory of his nature and character without reference to any created thing?

What two things is his glory 'above'?

It is as if the psalmist had written, Because this glory is above both the earth and the heavens, therefore let all the creatures and things in the earth, all creatures and things in the heavens, praise and magnify him.

What is meant by 'the *horn* of his people'?

The horn in many animals, as in the deer, is a mark of their strength and of their beauty. To pull down their horn into the

dust (see Job xvi : 15) is to degrade their strength and beauty. To lift up or exalt their horn is to show how strong and beautiful they are.

How does God exalt the horn of his people ?

Does 'the praise of all his saints' mean that his praise is the horn, that is, the strength and beauty of his people ?

What does the rest of the verse show that he means by his saints ?

How does God show that his saints are his own good people, dear to him ?

What is the meaning of 'Praise ye the Lord' ?

All *angels*, of whatever rank, all his *hosts*, with one accord, from the *heavens* and in the *heights*, sun at noon, moon at midnight, stars so bright—the visible hosts of the sky, as the angels are the invisible host—the heaven of heavens, where is the orbit of the planet, the path of the comet, and the track of every star, waters above the heavens, where the clouds sail, unite ye all in one song of praise, for he commanded and you were created. Ye sea monsters *from the earth*, ye floods in which they swim, ye heat and cold, white snow and dark smoke, strong wind that amid apparent anarchy doest his will, mountains in towering height, and lowly hills diversifying the earth, ye palm and pomegranate fruit-trees, ye firs and pines, *cedars of* every kind, wild beasts and tame, reptiles and fowls of every wing, small as the wren, majestic as the eagle, young men in your strength, maidens in your beauty, old men with lips of wisdom, children who lisp his praise, join in one song of praise, for in your life and beauty and fruit the excellent name of God is seen. Things in heaven and things in earth, join ye, for his glory is above *both* earth and heaven. And to his loving people, dear to him, God is the praise of all his saints.

Here is 'universal nature at worship, harping on ten thousand harps her perpetual psalm.'

Forty-fifth Sunday.

ISAIAH'S INVITATION TO THE HUNGRY AND THIRSTY SOUL.

ISAIAH.

CHAPTER LV.

1. Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money ; come ye, buy and eat ; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price.

2. Wherefore do ye spend money for *that which is* not bread, and your labor for *that which* satisfieth not ? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye *that which is* good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

3. Incline your ear, and come unto me : hear, and your soul shall live ; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, *even* the sure mercies of David.

4. Behold, I have given him *for* a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.

5. Behold, thou shalt call a nation *that* thou knowest not, and nations *that* knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the LORD thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel ; for he hath glorified thee.

6. Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near.

Who was Isaiah ? Read Isaiah (pronounced I-zay'-yah) i : 1 and xxxviii : 1.

Isaiah was the greatest of the prophets of the Old Testament. He lived to be an old man, and he probably lived at Jerusalem, about two hundred and fifty years after Solomon dedicated the temple.

How many kings ruled in Jerusalem while Isaiah lived ? Read Isaiah i : 1.

What foreign king came with an army to take Jerusalem while Isaiah was in Jerusalem ? Compare II.

Kings xviii : 13 with xix : 5.

Show that what Isaiah offers in this chapter is what God offers to us ?

What does the first word 'Ho' mean ?

'Ho' means two things : first, it is a call to stop a person, as when, if you wish a person going by to stop, you call out,

‘Ho, sir ! ho there !’ Secondly, it shows that you have something important to say to him : ‘Ho, sir ! I have something important to say to you.’

To whom is it that Isaiah calls ?

What is the important thing that he has to say to him ?

What kind of thirst is this ? Read Psalms xlii : 2, lxiii : 1.

What waters are meant ? Read John iv : 13, 14.

‘And he that hath no money’ : is water ever *sold* in the East ?

The thirsty traveller passing by, if he was poor, might think he had no money to buy the water and not turn aside to see until he heard, ‘Come ye, *he that hath no money*.’

Can this water be bought with money ? Read Acts viii : 18-20.

No man is so rich that he can buy forgiveness and happiness from God, and no man is so poor that he cannot have it from God if he will ‘come’ for it.

‘Buy and eat’ : how does the figure of eating represent the desire of the soul ?

What besides water may he buy ?

Wine and milk were luxuries of that land of grapes and flocks. They strengthened the weak body as well as refreshed it.

How beautiful is this invitation : as if the prophet said : Come, buy ; these are luxuries worth a price, a high price to any one fainting with hunger and thirst. But come, I will *sell* them to you for *nothing*.

What word of the invitation is repeated three times over ?

See how free the invitation is made. God speaks to us. He says : Come, come, come. He says : Ho, you thirsty one ! if you are poor, come. Ho, every one, if you are hungry as well as thirsty, *come, eat* and drink : yes, you shall have the best. COME. Ho, every one ! do not wait for money and do not ask the price.

What is always our Saviour's invitation to the blessings of his kingdom? Learn and repeat Revelation xxii: 17.

As free as a flowing fountain God offers these blessings to you. If you are humble enough to take them as a gift, you can have them; if you are so proud that you cannot take them as a gift, you cannot have them.

Does 'spend money for that which is no bread' mean that they *think* it is *not* bread when they buy it?

Can you name any of the things which men labor for and spend money for, and which, after all, do not satisfy them?

Explain 'Hearken diligently.'

'Eat ye that which is good': good for what?

What is meant by the 'fatness' of the soul?

The soul shall not be kept simply from starvation, but shall be more than satisfied with good things. Read Psalm xxxvi: 8.

'Incline your ear': is this figure of speech any stronger than 'hearken diligently'?

'Come unto me': who is meant by *me*?

What besides *listening* is meant by 'hear and your soul shall live'?

What is a covenant?

What are 'the sure mercies of David'? *Answer.*
The sure favors promised to David.

How are these sure favors of David an everlasting covenant?

As God promised that some one of David's children and grandchildren and descendants should be *always* king on his throne, it would be an *everlasting* covenant with David; and God promises that the *favors* promised on his side of the covenant should be *sure*. And every one who inclined his ear unto God, and loved and obeyed him, should have the favors which God promised him as surely as David's descendants would have God's covenant to David fulfilled. This would be the strongest kind of a promise to a Jew, who believed that what God promised to David could not fail.

‘Behold, I have given *him* for a witness’: who is meant by him? *Answer.* David or David’s son on his throne.

Who was King David’s greatest son that sat on his throne?

How was David or David’s son a witness to the people? Read John xviii : 37; Revelation i : 5.

How was David or David’s son a leader and commander to the people?

Who is meant by ‘thou’ in the fifth verse? *Answer.* Isaiah is probably thinking of David’s Son, the Messiah, and speaks to *him*.

What one nation among the nations of the world had God called to be his own?

What is meant, then, by saying that the Messiah shall call a nation that he knew not?

Explain ‘nations that know not thee.’

Do you know what nations of the world since that time have outwardly accepted Jesus as Saviour?

What is the reason given in the rest of the verse why all nations will run unto him?

It is as if it read in this way: ‘Nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee, because the Lord thy God shall glorify thee.’

How has God glorified his Son Jesus among the nations of the world?

Who is spoken to in ‘Seek ye the Lord’?

What is meant by seeking the Lord?

If a king who had great riches and great pleasures and great possessions was known to be ready to give them away to every one who came to ask him, and a messenger should come saying, ‘Seek ye the king,’ we would understand him to mean, Seek to obtain the good things which the king has to give.

When are we to seek him?

Does this mean that there will be a time when we may *not* find him if we *do* seek?

How are we to seek him in order to find him? Read Jeremiah xxix : 13.

Explain 'call ye upon him.'

There is no one, not even a child, who cannot do so simple a thing as to call upon God.

When are you to call on him in order to have him hear you?

How do we know that he will hear us if we call?
Read Matthew vii : 7, 8, and 11 ; Romans x : 13.

When is God especially near us to hear us?

Forty-sixth Sunday.

ISAIAH'S INVITATION.

ISAIAH.

CHAPTER LV.

7. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the **LORD**, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

8. For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways my ways, saith the **LORD**.

9. For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

10. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow, from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater;

11. So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it.

12. For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap *their* hands.

13. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree: and it shall be to the **LORD** for a name, for an everlasting sign, *that* shall not be cut off.

Repeat the last verse of the last lesson.

Who—does the seventh verse show—is to do this?

What is meant by 'his way' ?

Why will not God hear a wicked man who calls, but who does not forsake his way ?

Explain 'unrighteous man.'

What is meant by 'his thoughts' ?

'His thoughts' means the evil things that he is thinking of, the evil plans of life about which all his thoughts cluster.

Can any thought or plan of life which has not any thought of God in it be right ?

Show from Isaiah liii : 6 why he must return unto the Lord.

When you do not love a person, your thoughts go far away from him ; and when you begin to love him again, your thoughts return unto him.

Show from the sixth and seventh verses what three things a person who is seeking the Lord must do to have God's mercy given him.

Whose God is meant by 'our God' ?

What does 'our God' promise to do if we call upon him, forsake our ways, and return unto him ?

What word in the verse shows the freeness and fulness of his promise ?

Is the eighth verse a reason why he will abundantly pardon or why the wicked should forsake his ways and the unrighteous man his thoughts ?

God's thoughts are different from the unrighteous man's thoughts, and his ways differ from the ways of the wicked. God is right and they are wrong ; and that is a good reason why they should forsake their evil ways and return unto him. God's thoughts and ways are different from man's thoughts and ways in respect to *pardon*. It is hard for men to pardon, especially if any one has done the wrong over and over again ; but it is easy for God to pardon, no matter if the crime has been many times repeated, if the sinner is really sorry.

How is the greatness of the difference between God's ways and man's ways shown ?

The distance from heaven to earth is the greatest that we can think of, and the difference between God's plans for man and man's plans for himself is greater than man can comprehend, therefore man ought to believe that God's plan for him is better than his own plan for himself.

What is the meaning of 'For' in the tenth verse ? *Answer.* The tenth and eleventh verses are a reason why God will have mercy and abundantly pardon. I will certainly pardon such a wicked man who repents, for my word shall be as sure as the rain is sure to make the seed grow.

What two things does he use to show the certainty of his word ?

Rain never falls in vain : it makes the seed grow and makes the earth green and beautiful. The snow helps : it covers the plants in the winter and keeps them warm, it melts into the streams on the hill-tops and mountain-sides in the spring-time.

What three things do the rain and snow certainly do to the earth ?

What two things do they certainly make the earth do ?

What is it that is like the rain and snow ?

How is it like it in coming down from heaven ?

How is it like it in not returning thither ?

What is the meaning of 'void' ?

How is it like the rain and snow in what it accomplishes ?

In what shall it prosper ? Read Matthew xxiv : 35.

The rain does not always do what man thinks it is going to do, or what he thinks it should do ; but it does what God sent it to do. God's word does what God sent it to do, even though it does not seem to accomplish what we think it ought to accomplish, and it prospers, even though it does not seem to us to prosper at all.

How different are the forms of rain—in the fine dew, the few drops from a passing cloud, the quick shower, the heavy storm, the long and pouring floods—gently falling, driven by the

wind, shaken by thunder from the clouds—coming when you think it will not rain, and coming not when you think it *will* rain. So God's word, how different are its forms : like the dew, at morning and evening prayers, a few words of Scripture, a passing exhortation, preached in different ways, God's spirit coming when you do not expect it, and the services of God's house broken up when you did not expect them to be. But the result is *sure* : souls are as surely connected by God's word as the harvest comes every year from the rain.

But what kind of soil must there be to have the rain make the plants grow ?

Does God mean to say to *you* that you shall as certainly be pardoned as the rain shall fall ?

Is the twelfth verse a description of the joyfulness of a single soul forgiven or of the whole world when it is forgiven ?

Show from the Scriptures that joy and peace are two results of being forgiven ? Read Romans v : 1, 2, and Galatians v : 22.

What a beautiful, poetic description is the rest of this verse. And it is true, when one is converted, he goes out with joy in his heart. He is led forth on his daily duties with peace in his soul. As he looks out on mountains and hills, they seem to be singing the praise of God, and all the trees seem ready to clap their hands with delight.

Do you think the thirteenth verse a description of a converted soul or of the world when converted ?

The fir-tree is a kind of evergreen, and the meaning is that there will be a change in man's heart as great as if in the world the wild and tangled thorn-bushes should cease to grow and the beautiful evergreen firs should come up in their stead.

And so of the brier and the myrtle. The myrtle is a shade-tree, eight or ten feet high, thick and shrub-like, and with oval leaves and small, pale flowers. And the meaning is, that when the wicked forsakes his ways and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and they are pardoned, the change is as great as if a field overrun with briars should at once become thick-set with myrtles.

What are the thorns and briers in the wicked man's heart? Read Galatians v : 19-21.

What are the fir-trees and the myrtle-trees? Read Galatians v : 22-24.

'And *it* shall be to the Lord for a name': what shall be to the Lord for a name? *Answer.* This whole work of pardoning the wicked and the unrighteous man.

How shall it be to him for a name?

It shall be to him 'for an everlasting sign': a sign of what? *Answer.* A sign or pledge that he is true to his word as a God who offers freely to pardon.

How shall it be to him 'an *everlasting* sign that shall not be cut off'?

If God is a God so true to his word, and has made such promises to pardon as this chapter contains, is there any possible reason why you should not come and be pardoned?

Is it possible that when it says, 'Ho, every one, come, come ye; yea, come;' 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts'—is it possible that the promise is not intended for *you*?

Forty-seventh Sunday.

JEREMIAH'S ADDRESS ON KEEPING THE SABBATH.

J E R E M I A H .

CHAPTER XVII.

19. Thus said the **LORD** unto me; Go and stand in the gate of the children of the people, whereby the kings of Judah come in, and by the which they go out, and in all the gates of Jerusalem;

20. And say unto them, Hear ye the word of the **LORD**, ye kings of Judah, and all Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that enter in by these gates:

21. Thus saith the **LORD**; Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the sabbath day, nor bring *it* in by the gates of Jerusalem;

22. Neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the sabbath day, neither do ye any work, but hallow ye the sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers.

23. But they obeyed not, neither inclined their ear, but made their neck stiff, that they might not hear, nor receive instruction.

24. And it shall come to pass, if ye diligently hearken unto me, saith the LORD, to bring in no burden through the gates of this city on the sabbath day, but hallow the sabbath day, to do no work therein;

25. Then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem : and this city shall remain for ever.

26. And they shall come from the cities of Judah, and from the places about Jerusalem, and from the land of Benjamin, and from the plain, and from the mountains, and from the south, bringing burnt offerings, and sacrifices, and meat offerings, and incense, and bringing sacrifices of praise, unto the house of the LORD.

27. But if ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the sabbath day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day ; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched.

Who was Jeremiah ? Read Jeremiah i : 1-3.

Jeremiah lived about a hundred years after Isaiah lived. The city of An-a-thoth was about three miles from Jerusalem, and he lived very much in Jerusalem. While he was a prophet, King Nebuchadnezzar and his army from Babylon captured Jerusalem, and burned with fire the beautiful temple which Solomon built, and the king's palace, and all the great houses in the city. And all the north part of the land, from Samaria to the mountains of Lebanon, had been conquered by the foreign kings of Assyria long before Jeremiah was born.

The Hebrew people had become very wicked since the days of King David and King Solomon, and even in Jerusalem itself the Sabbath was broken by the people. The Jews have always been fond of making money, and they then had begun to trade, to buy and sell on the Sabbath day.

How long after Isaiah lived did Jeremiah live ?

What happened to Jerusalem and the temple during his life ?

How were the Hebrew people different from what they were in the days of David ?

Where did the Lord direct Jeremiah to go and stand to speak ?

The gate of a walled city was the place where the people

came together to talk, to hear the news, and to do business. It was some such public place as the post-office or market of a village or city now is.

Was Jeremiah to go to more than one gate ?

To what persons was Jeremiah to speak at the gates ?

How is 'all Judah' different from 'all the inhabitants of Jerusalem' ?

You can think how, as the prophet, who was well known in the city as a priest, began to speak, the crowd would increase by the side of the gate to hear him.

Whose word did he tell the people to hear ?

Jeremiah did not say that what he said was his *own* address, but was the word of the Lord. But our Saviour, when he spoke, did not say, 'Thus saith the Lord,' but, 'Verily, I say unto you, and Whosoever doeth these sayings of *mine*,' etc.

What does 'Take heed' mean ?

What two things, spoken of in the twenty-first verse, did he tell them to take heed to ?

What was sometimes done to the gates so as to keep the Sabbath holy ? Read Nehemiah xiii : 19.

In what different way does he forbid the people to do business on the Sabbath, in the twenty-second verse ?

Put the emphasis on the word *any*. Read in this way : Bear no burden on the Sabbath : do not carry it through the gates, the place of business ; do not carry it out of your houses, 'neither do ye *any* work.'

Where was this command to 'hallow ye the Sabbath day' given ?

When was the Sabbath first given ?

God commanded the people in Moses's time that they should not even gather the manna, the food which he himself sent on every day but the seventh, on the Sabbath day.

Who 'obeyed not,' 'neither inclined their ear' ?

What does 'made their neck stiff' mean ? *Answer.*

As an obstinate horse or mule sets his neck stiff and will not turn his head for the bit or bridle, so they would not let God lead them.

Why did they wish that 'they might not hear'?

Does 'receive instruction' mean receive instruction in respect to keeping the Sabbath, or receive instruction from the Scriptures *on* the Sabbath?

How did some of their fathers in Moses's time break the Sabbath? Read Exodus xvi: 26-28.

What does he promise shall come to pass if they keep the Sabbath?

Explain 'diligently hearken.'

'The gates of *this* city': why did he not speak of other cities of Judah too?

Jerusalem was the capital, and what was done there by the kings and people would be an example to the whole nation.

'No work *therein*': in what or in where?

you understand that the things which are to come to pass were to take place at the very gates of the city?

What a beautiful picture this is of the prosperity and favor which God will give them. Through these public gates, where the people gather, shall go kings who shall reign on David's throne, with their princes, in their chariots and on horses, with the procession of the people of the surrounding country and of the city inhabitants. The city shall be full of such happy times! See how God loves the Sabbath when he makes such a promise!

What does he promise about the city itself?

The kings on David's throne shall always rule in Jerusalem to the end of the world.

From what different places shall the people come to Jerusalem in those happy times?

The twenty-fifth verse is a picture of what will happen *at Jerusalem*: the twenty-sixth is a picture of the people coming from all parts of the land *to* Jerusalem.

In what direction from Jerusalem were 'the cities' of the tribe 'of Judah'?

'The places *about* Jerusalem' means the places *near* Jerusalem, like Jeremiah's city of Anathoth, two or three miles away.

In what direction was the land of Benjamin?

What plain is meant by 'the plain'? *Answer.* Probably the beautiful plain over the western mountains along the Mediterranean coast.

Where were 'the mountains' and what was there 'in the south'? *Answer.* The most mountainous part of the country was toward the north from Jerusalem, and 'the *south*' of the land was the more level desert and pasture country.

What would all the people bring to Jerusalem?

Explain the different kinds of sacrifices mentioned. Find them in Leviticus.

Who built 'the house of the Lord'?

God means that his holy day shall make gladness and rejoicing in all the cities and in every land where it is kept. How full of brightness these descriptions of these happy people who keep the Sabbath! The holy Sabbath God wishes to be The Happy Sabbath.

The reason why God thinks so much of the Sabbath and offers such promises for keeping it is because on the Sabbath all the people are taught every thing about him and his worship. The Sabbath itself shows that God created the world and rested the seventh day; that he gave his ten commandments on Sinai, when he said, Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy; that Jesus rose from the dead on the morning of the Sabbath-day. Where the Sabbath is kept, these three things are therefore always taught, that God is the Creator, Lawgiver, and Redeemer of mankind. Where the Sabbath is not kept, these things are not taught.

But suppose the people do *not* listen to God's command, and break the Sabbath by buying and selling, what does God then promise to do?

Is ‘kindle a fire in the gates thereof’ a figure of speech or a literal prediction? Read xlix: 27 and Amos i: 4, 7, 10, and 12.

Were the palaces of Jerusalem actually devoured with fire or not? Read II. Kings xxv: 9.

Did Jeremiah live to see them burned? Read Jeremiah lii: 13.

The reason why God punished the nation so severely for breaking the Sabbath was because breaking the Sabbath broke up his worship and broke up the religion which he had been at such pains to establish.

Could the Christian religion be preserved in this nation if the Christian Sabbath should be destroyed?

Can the Sabbath be a day of the highest happiness and gladness to you unless you are God’s child?

Forty-eighth Sunday.

THE WARNING TO THE WATCHMAN.

EZEKIEL.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

1. AGAIN the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
2. Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, and say unto them, When I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man of their coasts, and set him for their watchman :
3. If when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people ;
4. Then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning ; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head.
5. He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning ; his blood shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul.
6. But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned ; if the sword come, and take *any* person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity ; but his blood will I require at the watchman’s hand.
7. So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house

of Israel ; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me.

8. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked *man*, thou shalt surely die ; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked *man* shall die in his iniquity ; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

9. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it ; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity ; but thou hast delivered thy soul.

10. Therefore, O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel ; Thus ye speak, saying, If our transgressions and our sins *be* upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live ?

WHO was Ezekiel and where did he live ? Read Ezekiel i : 3.

We suppose that the prophet Ezekiel began to prophesy while Jeremiah was an old man. But Jeremiah was in Jerusalem or near it, while Ezekiel was in Chaldea, somewhere near the river Euphrates and the city of Babylon. We suppose, too, that Ezekiel was one of the ten thousand captives who were carried off by King Nebuchadnezzar from Jerusalem to Babylon, just a little before he burned Jerusalem with fire.

Compare the time and places where Ezekiel and Jeremiah lived.

Does 'the word of the Lord come unto me' mean that God spoke these words unto him, or that he had a vision of what he was to do and say ?

Can you give any reason why the Lord calls him 'son of man' ?

By what people was he surrounded in Babylon ?
Read iii : 11.

'When I bring the sword upon a land' : does this mean that sometimes God himself brings war, or that all wars are brought on every land by him ?

'A man of *their coasts*' : does this mean a man from the coasts of the sea ?

When they set such a man for a watchman, what was it his duty to do ? Read II. Samuel xviii : 24-27 ; II. Kings ix : 17-20.

What was meant by the watchman 'seeth the sword come upon the land' ?

What was the sound of the trumpet a signal of ?
Read Numbers x : 9.

Think of the responsibility of being a watchman on such a tower, and having the lives of all the people in your care, and of watching hour after hour all the day long against the enemy on this side and on that.

A watch-tower in that Eastern land was sometimes built for the purpose of watching the movement of enemies. Sometimes it was built on the city walls and sometimes on a hill. And by putting any man on the tower to be the watchman, the people showed that they trusted him. If the people of the country around knew the watchman was there, they could go to their vineyards and their farms to work. They knew no band of Arab robbers nor army of Philistines or Assyrians could come without the watchman seeing them and sounding the trumpet.

Describe a person in the field 'who hears the sound of the trumpet and taketh not warning.'

Explain 'if the sword come and take him away.'

What is the meaning of 'his blood shall be on his own head'? Read II. Samuel i : 16 ; Matthew xxvii : 25 ; and Acts xviii : 6.

When a murderer kills a man, the blood of the man found on the murderer is a proof that he is guilty. But if a man takes his own life, his blood is on himself, and is a proof of his guilt in killing himself.

Does this mean that the enemy shall not be guilty ?

How does the fourth verse show that the *watchman* shall not be guilty ?

Describe how 'he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul' ?

The two things for the watchman to do were to watch and to sound the trumpet. That is all he can do ; and after he has done that, each man's duty is to take care of himself.

Suppose the watchman does not sound the trumpet, who then, is guilty of the death of any person ?

Suppose the watchman should suddenly see an army or a band of robbers near him, and should be frightened and should run off to save his life without sounding his trumpet, then he would peril the lives of all the people. He has no right to save his own life by risking the lives of all the people.

What is meant by any person 'taken away in *his iniquity*'?

'His blood will I require': who will require it?

How will he 'require it at the watchman's hand'?

In some cities, like New-York, there are high watch-towers, on which watchmen are put to watch for fires, and whose duty it is, when they see a fire, to ring a fire-bell telling in what part of the city the fire is. If they see a fire and ring the bell, telling the part of the city where the fire is, then, if the people in that part of the city do not take care against the fire, the people will be to blame and not the watchman if their houses or their lives are lost. But if the watchman sees a fire and does not sound the bell, and some one is burned up, then the watchman is to be blamed for it, for the people depended on him to watch for fires and to sound the bell for their warning.

How, now, does God say that he had made Ezekiel a watchman?

What is meant by the house of Israel?

How was he to know when to warn the house of Israel?

A watchman against enemies or a watchman for fire had to depend on his own eyes to know when danger comes, but a watchman against the enemies of men's souls has God to tell him by word of mouth when the danger comes.

What is meant by 'warn them *from me*'?

What was the warning which God gave Ezekiel for the wicked?

When did God first say that whoever did wickedness should 'surely die'? Read Genesis ii : 16, 17.

If Ezekiel did not speak to the wicked, who would be guilty of the death of the wicked?

Does this mean that the wicked man would not be held guilty of his own wickedness ?

The wicked man will die *in his iniquity*. That shows that he will be held guilty of his own sins and will be responsible for them.

Is it meant that any one else besides Ezekiel is such a watchman ?

How is the watchman to keep himself entirely free from guilt ?

If God's servant now gives the warning from God and any one dies in his sins, who is guilty of it ?

Is any one not a minister or a public teacher such a watchman as this ?

What is it his duty to do ?

Who are the people over which every person is to be a watchman ?

Even though such persons die in their iniquities, how only can we deliver our souls ?

Show the force of 'Therefore' at the beginning of the tenth verse.

What did the captive children of Israel say ?

What did they mean by '*If* our sins *be upon us*' ?

What did they mean by 'pine away in them' ?

We must remember that Ezekiel was among captives and slaves, and they were overwhelmed with sorrow and oppression. In the midst of their oppression and trouble, they were told that they were carried captive from Palestine because they were guilty of such great crimes against God. Almost in despair, they cry out : Well, if we *are* such great sinners, and are almost worn out with our sins and their punishment for them, what is the use of living ? we might as well die first as last.

Does 'Thus ye speak' mean This is what you say in your hearts, or This is what you openly say in answer to God's reproof ?

What is the meaning, then, of 'How should we then live' ?

Just so sometimes sinful men now say when the watchman sounds his alarm. Many a heart, almost in despair because it knew it was guilty and the soul that sinneth shall surely die, has said to itself: 'Well, if my sins be upon me, and I *do* pine away in them, how should I, *why should I* then live!'

One of the great arts of Satan is to make men sin, and then make them wretched, and then make them think they are so rightly punished and so miserable that there is no use of wishing for the hope which God wishes to give them.

Forty-ninth Sunday.

EZEKIEL.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

11. Say unto them, *As I live*, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

12. Therefore, thou son of man, say unto the children of thy people, The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression: as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness; neither shall the righteous be able to live for his *righteousness* in the day that he sinneth.

13. When I shall say to the righteous, *that* he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it.

14. Again, when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right;

15. *If* the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die.

16. None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him; he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live.

17. Yet the children of thy people say, The way of the Lord is not equal: but as for them, their way is not equal.

18. When the righteous turneth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall even die thereby.

19. But if the wicked turn from his wickedness, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall live thereby.

20. Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. O ye house of Israel, I will judge you every one after his ways.

What was it, described in the tenth verse, which the Hebrew people said in answer to God's reproof of their sins?

What did God tell his watchman to say to them in their despondency?

What is the meaning of 'As I live'? *Answer.* As surely as I am the living God, what I say to you is true and sincere.

What a most wonderful assurance is this to the Hebrew people in Chaldea, and to all sinful people everywhere! God tells his prophet to say to them, I, Jehovah, the living God, solemnly and sincerely say, As I am the living God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked.

When a person says what the Hebrew captives did, it was really saying that God *does* take pleasure in the death of the wicked. But God says, I am not delighted with the death of the sinner, but I *am delighted* if he turns from his wicked way and lives.

But is it God's pleasure that the wicked should live without ceasing to be wicked?

Explain 'turn from his way.'

God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but he does not say he has pleasure in the wicked *living*, unless they turn from their wickedness, for he cannot take back his command, The wicked shall *surely die*.

But how did God show that he wishes them to turn?

How does the last question of the verse show that they must die unless they turn?

It is as if he said, Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for ye must die unless ye turn from them; and why will ye die, O house of Israel?

Notice now, again, the meaning of Therefore at the beginning of the twelfth verse: *Because* I have no pleasure in their death, and *because* they must die unless they turn, Therefore say unto the people, The righteousness of the righteous, etc.

What is 'righteousness'?

'Shall not deliver him': deliver whom and from what?

Explain 'the day of his transgression.'

A righteous man, then, must always continue to be righteous and must never sin, if he would have God approve him and bless him.

Name any righteous men mentioned in the Scriptures who were condemned in the day of their transgression. Read Genesis iii : 17-19; Numbers xx : 10-12; xxvii : 12-14; II. Samuel xxiv : 10-13; I. Kings xi : 9-11.

How shall it be as to the wicked man if he turns from his wickedness? Repeat Isaiah lv : 7.

Name any wicked men mentioned in the Scriptures who were forgiven when they turned from their wickedness. Read Luke xxiii : 40-43; Acts ix : 3-6.

What does God mean when he says that the righteous shall surely live?

What does 'trust to his own righteousness' mean?

Explain 'all his righteousness shall not be remembered.'

The past righteousness shall not be reckoned to excuse his sin. If a person steals, he cannot say that because he has always been honest before he ought not to be punished. Read xviii : 24.

What does God mean when he says that the wicked shall surely die?

Can a wicked man do that which is lawful and right without being sorry for having done that which is unlawful and wrong?

What three things are mentioned in the fifteenth verse which a wicked man who does that which is lawful and right will do?

What was it to 'restore the pledge'?

When a rich man loaned money to a poor man, sometimes the poor man would give him his garment or his cow or mule, as a pledge that he would pay it back. The pledge was worth

more than the money, and if the poor man did not come just at the time appointed with the money, the rich man might refuse to take the money and to give up the pledge.

Explain 'give again that he had robbed.'

What was the law of Moses about returning what had been stolen ? Read Exodus xxii : 1.

What are 'the statutes of life,' and what is it to walk in them ? Read chapter xx : 13.

Show, from chapter xviii : 27, what is meant by 'live and not die.'

What two reasons are given, in the sixteenth verse, why he shall surely live ?

Who is it that says that he will not mention his sins unto him ?

Would it be right for him, if he should choose to do it, to remember his past sins and punish him for them ?

Can a wicked man become righteous without being sorry for his wickedness ?

But why are we told in the New Testament that we must trust in the Saviour to be righteous in God's sight ? *Answer.* Because God has sent his Son for us to trust in, and to trust in him is one of the lawful and right things which he asks the wicked to do.

Ezekiel lived almost six hundred years before the Saviour was born ; but any wicked man who was willing to turn from his evil ways and do that which is lawful and right would have been willing to accept and love God's Son if he had come then. And just so any heathen man now who is ready to turn from his wickedness and do that which is lawful and right will be all ready to believe in the Saviour whenever he learns who he is.

'*Yet the children of thy people say*': does 'Yet' mean that the people still say this after what God has told Ezekiel to say to them, or does it mean, And yet this is what the people have said to themselves ?

What is meant by 'The way of the Lord is not

equal' ? *Answer.* This way of treating the wicked is not just.

What is the meaning, then, of Their way is not equal ?

Notice, now, how God repeats, in the eighteenth and nineteenth verses, the same description of his way of treating the righteous and the wicked. As if he said, I cannot stop to dispute with you.

Is not what the nineteenth verse says in respect to the righteous just and right ?

Suppose a man has always been truthful, and at some time he tells a lie, has he any right to say that he is not guilty of a lie because he has always been truthful before ? Suppose a man kills another, can he say, I am not guilty of killing, for I have never killed any one before ?

Isn't it *right*, then, for God to hold each man to an account of every bad act ?

Is not what the nineteenth verse says about the wicked just and right ?

But what becomes of all the past sins of his wicked life ?

If God wishes to pardon, no one ought to say that he has no right to pardon. And if God pardons one wicked man who is sorry for his sins, what dreadful wickedness for another wicked man who is *not* sorry to say, God's ways are unjust, because he pardons that man and does not pardon me.

What, after all, does God reply to the house of Israel in respect to their thoughts of his unjust way ?

Does this show that he will judge the nation for its sins, or each person in the nation ?

How will God judge each one at the last ? Repeat what Solomon said in Ecclesiastes xii : 14.

Fiftieth Sunday.

MALACHI'S PREDICTION OF THE MESSIAH.

M A L A C H I .

CHAPTER IV.

1. FOR, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven ; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble : and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the **LORD** of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

2. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings ; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.

3. And ye shall tread down the wicked ; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do *this*, saith the **LORD** of hosts.

4. Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, *with* the statutes and judgments.

5. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the **LORD** :

6. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, last I come and smite the earth with a curse.

THERE are sixteen prophets in the Old Testament, beginning with Isaiah. There are four of them called the Great Prophets : Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. The other twelve are called the Lesser Prophets. Malachi was the last of all these, and lived, we suppose, at Jerusalem. He lived about one hundred and fifty years after Ezekiel, and about four hundred years before Jesus was born. But the temple had been built again after Ezekiel died and before Malachi was born.

The priests of the Temple in his time were corrupt and wicked men, and the people did not bring their offerings, as they used to do, according to the law. In the last two chapters, Malachi foretells the coming of John the Baptist and of the Saviour. In these lessons we have room only for the last chapter, but notice how this last chapter of the Bible speaks of two persons about whom the first chapters of the New Testament begin.

What does Malachi speak of in the last two chapters ?

How can you prove that he speaks of John the Baptist? Compare Malachi iii : 1 with Matthew xi : 10; Mark i : 2.

What kind of a day did Malachi say was to come?

What day had he spoken of in the chapter before this? See the second verse.

Malachi says that a day is coming—that is, a time is coming—when the good and the bad shall be separated, the good priests and the bad priests, the good people and the bad people. In the third chapter and second and third verses he uses two figures to show how they shall be separated. He says the messenger of the Lord shall be like a refiner's fire, which purifies gold and silver, and in which the dross is burned up and the gold and silver come out more pure. He says, too, he shall be like a fuller's soap, which will show which garments can be washed clean and which cannot. The *day* which he speaks of is a *Day of Separation*. In the first and second verses of this chapter he says that day shall be like an oven to burn up the wicked and like sunrise to the good.

How was John the Baptist like a refiner's fire and like fuller's soap? *Answer.* His preaching was so strong and sharp that he compelled people to show which side they were on, whether they were among the good or among the bad. Read Matthew iii : 7-11.

An oven in that land was a plastered hole in the ground, in which a fire was kindled to heat it, and the thin dough was baked by pasting it for two or three minutes against the hot sides of the oven.

How were the proud and the wicked to be as stubble?

Stubble, straw, and sticks were used to heat the oven; or after the oven was heated stubble thrown in would quickly wither and be consumed.

Explain 'shall leave them neither root nor branch.'

Read Amos ii : 9.

The day cometh, that is, a time cometh. Perhaps he meant the whole time from the coming of John the Baptist to the destruction of Jerusalem after the Saviour was put to death.

How did John the Baptist say that Jesus would separate the good from the bad ? Read Matthew iii : 12.

But what shall come to pass to those that fear God's name ?

How was Jesus the Sun of righteousness ? Read Matthew iv : 16 ; John i : 9 and viii : 12.

Show what the Sun of righteousness is in comparison with the darkness of sin and death.

What is meant by the 'wings of the Sun of righteousness' ?

At sunrise the beams of the sun spread out along the horizon like the wings of a bird, and then the sun, like a bird, begins his flight through the firmament.

But how does the sun at sunrise have *healing* in his wings ?

Plants sicken and die if kept continually in darkness, and all the trees and plants of the world would sicken and die if night should continue. And if, after they should have sickened and were ready to die, the *sun* should arise, there would be healing in his wings. All nature would begin to revive to health and beauty.

Show how the Sun of righteousness arises with healing in his wings to the world in sin.

This same sun that would bring health to plants rooted in the earth would make the heavens like an oven to plants not rooted.

'And ye shall go forth' : who shall go forth ?

What does 'grow up as calves of the stall' mean ?

Answer. As calves grow fat and sleek in the stall, so shall ye be full of health, enjoyment, beauty, and prosperity.

Does 'ye shall tread down the wicked' mean put down the wicked by force, or does it mean your goodness shall triumph over the opposition of wicked men ? Compare Psalm xci : 13.

Show how the last part of the verse shows the completeness of the triumph.

If you think of the progress of the Christian religion from the birth of Jesus until now, and then think of the Jews scat-

tered among all the nations of the earth, and of the little power they have in comparison with the power of the Christian nations, how wonderfully have those that feared the Lord trodden his enemies as ashes under the soles of their feet.

Is it right to triumph over such enemies ?

Is it right to put them down if they are willing to begin to fear the Lord ?

‘Remember ye’ : who are ye ?

We should notice that these are the last words of the last prophet of the Old Testament, and that he tells now all who fear the Lord what to do.

How much is meant by ‘the law of Moses my servant’ ? Read Deuteronomy iv : 10-13.

As there were to be no more prophets till the Messiah should come, it was necessary for them to pay close attention to the law of Moses.

Do the ‘statutes and judgments’ mean something in *addition* to the law of Moses, or only smaller parts of that law ? Read Deuteronomy iv : 14 and Exodus xxi : 1.

Why is the word ‘Behold’ used before the promise of the last two verses ?

What is the promise ?

How do we know that ‘Elijah the prophet’ meant John the Baptist ? Read Matthew xi : 11-14 and xvii : 10-13.

Why is that day called great and terrible ? *Answer* Because it would be a day of great things to the good, and a terrible day to the wicked.

Whether the day of the Lord means the day of the birth of the Saviour, or the day of his death, or the time of his life, it was a day of separation, when the refiner’s fire would test who were silver and gold and who were dross, when the fuller’s soap would show who would be cleansed and who would not, when the proud and wicked would burn like stubble in the oven and those that fear the Lord would see the Sun of righteousness with healing in his wings—a day great and terrible to the friends and foes of God.

‘And he shall turn’: who shall turn?

What is the meaning of ‘turn the hearts’ of father and children to each other? *Answer.* Give them a true love for each other’s souls throughout the world.

‘Lest I come and smite the earth with a curse’: why should God smite the earth with a curse unless these things come to pass?

How did God once smite the earth with a curse, and for what? Read Genesis vi: 5-8, 17, 18.

Fifty-first Sunday.

REVIEW LESSON FOR THE FOURTH QUARTER OF THE YEAR.

In what five books of the Bible have the lessons been the last quarter?

What two psalms have we studied?

THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-NINTH PSALM.

What is the subject of the psalm?

Show the different ways in which David shows in the first five verses the omniscience of God.

In how many ways does he imagine that he *might try* to escape God’s knowledge?

Why are these thoughts of God’s omniscience precious to David?

What will the omniscient God do to the wicked?

What does David wish the omniscient God to do to himself?

Is the thought of God’s knowledge of you precious or disagreeable to you? Why?

THE ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-EIGHTH PSALM.

What is this psalm?

How is it divided into two parts?

What are the words ‘Praise ye the Lord’ in Hebrew?

Name the different things called to praise God from the heavens.

What are the two reasons given why they should praise him ?

Name the different things called to praise God from the earth.

What are the two reasons given why they should praise him ?

Can any one not God's child truly praise God with the praise of this psalm ?

ISAIAH'S INVITATION.

Who was Isaiah and when did he live ?

To whom is his invitation given ?

To what is it an invitation ?

Show how *free* the invitation is.

Name any things which men labor for and spend money for which do not satisfy.

What does God promise to those who incline their ear and come unto him ?

What is meant by seeking the Lord ?

Where are we to seek him ?

What things are we to do when we seek him ?

What does he promise us if we seek him in this way ?

What reasons are given in the eighth and ninth verses why he will pardon ?

Explain the figure of the rain and the snow.

Show why it is not possible that this invitation is not intended for *you*.

JEREMIAH'S ADDRESS ON KEEPING THE SABBATH.

Who was Jeremiah, and how long after Isaiah did he live ?

Where did the Lord direct him to stand and to speak ?

To what does he tell these people to take heed ?

When did God command their fathers to hallow the Sabbath-day ?

When was the Sabbath first instituted ?

What was the punishment for breaking the Sabbath in Moses's time ?

What does God promise them if they keep the Sabbath ?

Show how the prosperity and happiness of the nation are meant in the twenty-sixth verse.

What does God mean that his holy day shall make in every land where it is kept?

Show as clearly as you can the reason why God thinks so much of the Sabbath and makes such large promises for keeping it?

What does God promise the people if they do *not* keep it?

Show clearly the reason why God punishes so severely for not keeping the Sabbath.

Can the Sabbath be a day of the highest happiness and gladness to you unless you are God's child?

THE WATCHMAN'S WARNING.

Compare the time and place where Jeremiah and Ezekiel lived.

What was the duty of a watchman?

Explain the whole figure in the first six verses by a fire watch-tower in New-York.

How was Ezekiel such a watchman?

If God's servants have sounded the trumpet to you, who is guilty if you die?

What does God say to show that he has no pleasure in the death of the wicked?

Explain 'the righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression.'

Explain 'the wicked shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness.'

If the wicked shall live when he turns from his wickedness and does that which is lawful and right, why are we taught in the New Testament that we must trust in the Saviour in order to live?

Explain Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal.

Is it God that makes the difference between one who is saved and one who is lost, or man himself?

By what will God judge every person at the last?

MALACHI'S PREDICTION OF MESSIAH'S DAY.

How long before our Lord's day did Malachi live?

Prove that Malachi speaks of John the Baptist.

What kind of a day does Malachi say was to come?

How was the coming of our Lord like an oven and like sunrise to the bad and the good?

Explain 'healing in his wings.'

What special reason is there why Malachi should bid them remember the law of Moses?

How do we know that Malachi meant by Elijah the prophet John the Baptist?

How was it to be a great and dreadful day?

The day of Jesus the Messiah has already come. Has the Sun of righteousness risen to you, or is the day likely to prove to you like an oven?

fifty-second Sunday.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR.

WHAT are the psalms?

How many psalms are there?

Show how and when David wrote one of them.

Whom does the *First Psalm* describe?

How does he show the difference between the righteous and the ungodly?

What will be the difference between them in the end?

When was the *Third Psalm* written?

Describe the troubles of King David then.

What was his shield against his troubles?

How did he expect to obtain salvation from his troubles?

What does the *Nineteenth Psalm* describe?

Which teaches more clearly the knowledge of God, the heavens or the Scriptures?

Which warns us of sin and promises us great reward?

What shepherd wrote the *Twenty-third Psalm*?

What things does he show the Lord does for him as a shepherd?

Why shall we not want if we have Jesus for our Shepherd ?

In the *Twenty-seventh Psalm*, what is the reason that David gives why he does not fear his enemies ?

What is the one thing that he desires and seeks after ?

What is the thing that prevented his fainting in the midst of his troubles ?

How does David describe his desire for God in the *Forty-second Psalm* ?

Why was his soul cast down in him ?

What is his remedy for discouragement and despondency of heart ?

How does the *Forty-sixth Psalm* represent God as a help in trouble ?

What is meant by the river which makes glad God's city ?

How is the triumph of God over enemies shown ?

What is the *Fifty-first Psalm* ?

What is the one thing spoken of throughout the psalm ?

What must we do to have our sins forgiven ?

What must we have to keep us from further sin ?

When we are delivered from sin, what will our tongue and our lips do ?

When is it supposed that the *Sixty-seventh Psalm* was sung ?

Whom does it ask God's blessing upon besides 'upon us' ?

Why is it a glad thing that God judges the people and governs the nations ?

What are the two parts of the *Eighty-fourth Psalm* ?

What is meant by *amiable* tabernacles ?

Show how 'they go from strength to strength' to appear before God.

Why is 'a day in thy courts better than a thousand' ?

Who wrote the *Ninetieth Psalm* ?

What is God called in this psalm ?

How are God's life and man's life compared ?

Why does God's wrath cut short man's life ?

What is it to have the *beauty* of God upon us ?

How is the *Ninety-first Psalm* like the ninetieth ?

From what things does he promise to protect us ?

Do these things represent spiritual enemies or not ?

How does the psalm say we can have the long life and salvation promised in it ?

What kind of a psalm is the *One Hundred and Third* ?

Show how David represents the height of God's mercy, the breadth of his forgiveness, the tenderness of God's pity.

What does the *One Hundred and Thirty-seventh Psalm* commemorate ?

How do you explain the prayer against Babylon in the last part ?

What attribute of God does the *One Hundred and Thirty-ninth Psalm* describe ?

Give some of the ways in which David shows the omniscience of God.

Give some of the ways by which we might try to escape God's knowledge of us.

What difference is there between the good and bad about wishing God to know all things ?

What are the two parts of the *One Hundred and Forty-eighth Psalm* ?

What are the reasons given why all these things should praise him ?

What was the Song of Moses at the Red Sea ?

How may you suppose this song to be like the song of Moses spoken of in the Revelation ?

What was the one great command to be taught by the Hebrews to their children ?

Where were the parents to teach their children ?

Is it right to give up teaching them at home because they are taught in Sunday-school ?

Name as many of the things as you can which Solomon prayed for at the dedication of the Temple.

What did he do after he had finished his prayer ?

What was the question which Job and his friends had been discussing ?

About what three things in the part of the address which we had did God question Job?

How does he show Job that he cannot understand how sin and suffering exist?

Repeat some of the proverbs of Solomon?

What seven things are an abomination unto God?

For what reasons does Solomon tell us in Ecclesiastes to remember our Creator in youth?

What does he say is the conclusion of the whole matter?

What is it that God offers us through Isaiah's invitation?

Show the *freeness* of the invitation.

When and how are we to seek the Lord?

What is promised us if we do seek him?

Where did Jeremiah speak to the people about keeping the Sabbath?

What are the reasons why God takes such pains to have the Sabbath kept?

What three greatest events in the history of the world are brought to mind by the coming of the Sabbath?

What did God mean by telling Ezekiel that he was a watchman for the house of Israel?

After the watchman has done his duty, who is responsible for escape from danger?

How are you to be watchman?

How are you to hear the alarm of the watchman?

What were the principal things which Malachi predicted?

Whom did he mean by Elijah?

How must the era of Christ's religion be either a great or a dreadful day to you?

Has the Sun of righteousness arisen to you with healing in his wings?

All these psalms, songs, proverbs, and prophecies are designed to lead you on to the day of Christ. He has come, and you know and see what David and Moses and Job and Solomon and Isaiah and the prophets could not see. He comes to you to be your Saviour: how much greater is the blessing or the ruin which you choose for yourself.

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: Sept. 2005

Preservation Technologies
A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111

B&V
1560
K
5th yr

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 020 185 613 9

The
SENIOR YEAR

of the
GRADUATED
Sunday School

TEXT BOOKS.